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JOHN REDMOND

THE MAN AND THE DEMAND

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A BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY IN IRISH POLITICS

BY

L. G. REDMOND-HOWARD

WITH 9 ILLUSTRATIONS
INCLUDING A PHOTOGRAVURE PLATE

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INTRODUCTION

THE present volume is the outcome first of a sincere study of the Irish problem and a wish to emphasize the points of agreement rather than accentuate the differences that separate the English and the Irish. We are rapidly approaching the last phase of Irish politics. And if an apology for the biographical form of the study is asked for, it is because it was thought the best answer to Lord Beaconsfield's demand fifty years ago—"We want a man who will tell us what the Irish problem really is."

That man to-day is Mr. John Redmond, than whom few could be more typical of that Irish demand which has become almost synonymous with politics. It is in no sense an inspired or an official work, for the simple reason that it was undertaken as a study rather than as a biography, that it is intended more as a personification of the Irish problem than as a personal character sketch.

It has been written, therefore, independently of Mr. Redmond, but at the suggestion of various friends and

with the kind assistance of many valuable helpers who have known the Irish leader. In particular I may mention Mr. Stead, whose monograph I have found very valuable, and Mr. Barry O'Brien, from whose Life of Parnell he has kindly allowed me to quote.

I may also mention Father Kane, Mr. Redmond's old schoolmaster, Father F——, a school companion, His Honour Judge Barry, K.C., The Editor of the *Clongownian*, Mr. Wilfred Meynell, and many others, who have supplied me with personal information, in addition to which I have embodied in the work impressions of my intimate relations with Mr. Redmond, who is my uncle, many years ago. His speeches and his public utterances have, however, been studied purely from a political point of view. Any analysis of the Irish demand I thought would be more authoritative if culled from the common property of the Press.

Throughout I have endeavoured to keep two objects in view.

The first was to give an exposition of the man as he appears in the framework of his career, in broad outline and without entering into the personal controversies which must surround every public man, but which gradually fade, like the dust from the sculptor's chisel, leaving the main features clear and sharp.

In the second place, I have done my best to present the Irish problem as it is at root—that is to say, in

the problem of self-government. For there have been three grievances, two of which have been, or are on the way to being, solved—the educational or religious problem and the agricultural or industrial problem. The National University solved one; Wyndham's Land Act of 1903 solved the other. The last, that of Home Rule, remains.

Home Rule is probably the most misrepresented term in the whole vocabulary of English politics, and the theory that the "Union" has anything to do with the unity of the Empire the worst pun ever perpetrated. Unionism really spells bureaucracy, Home Rule democracy, and it is a strange historical curiosity that never has Home Rule been judged upon its own merits, or an attempt been made to justify the working of it as a system. Whenever it has been presented by an almost unanimous Ireland, it has been met by intellectual panic by an almost unanimous England—at least, till the rise of English democracy and its greatest leader, W. E. Gladstone. It has been steadily fought as a scare. To the average Englishman the Union is something in the nature of things—a kind of divine law. To the average Tory, Home Rule is not only something foolish, but something wicked and immoral in itself. The notion, however mistaken, is not inexplicable. Home Rule has always been supported by all that patriotism and religion can supply to an economic movement, and perhaps

it is for this reason that it has entered the English mind in the guise either of a Popish danger, second only to that betrayed by Titus Oates, or else as a disruption of the Empire and a kind of Sicilian Vespers. And the speeches of the great anti-Home Rulers, from Mr. Chamberlain to the late Earl Percy, merely ring the changes on these two ideas like warning signal bells. How the establishment of a vigorous national power in Ireland composed of laymen exclusively can be a clerical danger passes my comprehension. If it is a danger, the danger is to the clericals, not from them; but personally, I think the spheres of priests and laymen will always be distinct and apart under Home Rule. As to Separation, I will yield to none in my admiration of, and my sympathy with, the Irish genius and the sufferings of Ireland; but I should quarrel to the last with the man who wished to separate Ireland from England. In every British Colony the Irish emigrants form one of the main props of Empire; and even were it possible one hundred years ago to establish an independent and hostile Ireland, the colonization which has diffused the Irish all over the world, so that there are more Irish in the British Dominions beyond the Seas than in Ireland herself, has absolutely changed the problem. And as the Norman families of the Pale in Ireland became *Hiberniores Hibernis ipsis*, the day may come when Irishmen in the

INTRODUCTION

Colonies may become more Imperial than even the Imperialists. The establishment of a great world-wide power, self-sufficient in trade, internally fostering its own industries by preferential tariffs against external powers, the facilitating of intercommunication between the Home Country and the Colonies, is an idea not without attraction to the Irishman, not only at home, where his whole trade depends on the English market, but in the Colonies, where many of the farmers and town manufacturers are Irishmen. But as Grattan said, Ireland looks to the Empire as a safeguard of her own individuality, not as its suppression. An Empire built to the detriment of Ireland is not one that can ever permanently appeal to Ireland, for loyalty is at root egotistic. Separation to be made impossible must be made undesirable.

There is, however, another and perhaps the greatest of all points in the Home Rule question to which I wish to draw attention, and that is what I may call its future social effect. Professor Dicey once offered a prize for a new argument for Home Rule. I do not know whether I have any claim to it, but it has always been my conviction that the argument from the past is far less potent than the prospective argument. In Ireland we are too traditional, too little scientific; and as the result an historic dissertation on the days of Cromwell, who, unlike Queen Anne, is as much alive as Mr.

Asquith, has far more weight than an economic argument on possibilities of future development. The Englishman is proverbially ignorant of history, which is the very breath of an Irish patriot, and the Irishman who has never had the political leisure to turn to industry cannot discuss impersonally the problem in cold-blooded terms of practical business. Hence the House of Commons—if the two parties, British and Irish, could be personified—would present the picture of two men locked up in a room to settle a question—one ardent, with a heart smarting from the memory of centuries of oppression, impatient to redress an evil which was driving his family from the land, beggars and starving; and the other sitting comfortably beside a glass of port, with a conscious rectitude begotten of absolute ignorance of everything beyond the day-book and the year's ledger. The one speaks in terms of emotion: the other in terms of economics: the one is full of past grievances, the other of concrete remedies for the future. And I should myself give up the whole controversy in despair were it not for the conviction that every Nationalist sentiment or extravagance is but at bottom the statement of an economic grievance—a fact which only years of comparison between the two peoples by contact and residence has brought home to me. The racial characteristics of the two peoples have coloured both the demand

and its refusal, but in both cases the antagonism has been due to misunderstandings. Take, for example, the great Land Transfer Act of 1903. Had it been advocated purely in terms of Socialist rapacity, race hatred or class jealousy, it would not have even obtained a moment's hearing. At the same time, when once the sentiment which was the motive force of the Land League and the Fenian movement was turned into terms of political economy, it immediately passed with the approval of all parties. Nor is this exceptional. Nearly every year the Statute Book, in grave, legal terms, approves of what was previously advocated at riotous meetings engineered by hired professional politicians. And he would be a bold man who would stand up in the House of Commons to propose the reversal of any of the great measures, such as the withdrawal of Local Government, the re-establishment of the Irish Church, the abolition of the National University or the exclusion of Catholics from participation in parliamentary, naval or official occupations.

This curious situation is due to the fact that the Imperial Parliament by its actions has destroyed the possibility of deliberation, avowed that agitation is the only possible means of obtaining a remedy, and compelled the mind of Ireland continually to brood on its wrongs and regret the loss of its Parliament in vain.

Ireland is thus divided into six or seven different and divergent parties. The Churches are more antagonistic to each other than probably in any country in the world. It is doubtful whether the fight in Barcelona between Anti-clericals and Catholics is half so bitter as between Catholics and Orangemen in Belfast. Again, the Irish gentry have almost all—true, there are a few laudable exceptions—abandoned that lead of intellect which they held in the days of Grattan, or even in those of Isaac Butt. It was their duty to direct, to regulate, to moderate, to colour and elevate the national movement; instead, they have either emigrated as the French nobles in the days of the French Revolution, or else they have taken up an entirely antagonistic attitude towards the people. Their loyalty has been, not the altruism of heroes, but the cupboard love of placemen using, or rather abusing, bureaucracy to their own ends, as did the men of the old Irish Parliament who were bribed to pass the Union; though it must not be forgotten that the iniquities of individual landlords have been visited on the class as a whole quite as unjustly. The result of this has been that there is no Irish public opinion, but only a war of classes, creeds and castes, each carrying hostilities on in different planes and never meeting together to adjust their differences or trying to understand each other. There has been a continual appeal to the outsider, to America on

the one side and to England on the other, to bigoted Protestantism and to no less heated Catholicism, to oppressed tenants and oppressing landlords; but never till the meeting of the Dunraven Conference was there an attempt to settle the problem between the actual combatants. The appeal to the outside bully of coercion has been met, of course, by a no less violent appeal to the outside bully of Fenianism: with the result that the quarrels have always been carried on by outsiders and Ireland has been wrecked.

Only some form of parliament or legislative assembly can bring all denominations of thought, both political and religious, into the same focus. Only a common meeting ground can secure that unity of national aim to which all interests can come for readjustment. Only in an intellectual contest can the true value of economic ideas be tested. And unless all creeds and classes take their part and exercise their proper influence, the result is bound to be a tyranny. A parliament composed entirely of the representatives of the agricultural vote would be as much a danger as a bureaucracy entirely limited to landlords, just as both might be an equal danger to the commercial interests of Ulster. Only in a parliament or deliberative chamber can the value of education, experience and interest properly affect legislation; without it, there would inevitably result the unthinking will of the majority, irrespective of any con-

sideration but that of numerical strength. The working of the Local Government Act is a sufficient refutation of those who would maintain that Irishmen are purely political. The granting of Home Rule would in all probability kill politics properly so called, and the new parliament arouse no more anxiety than the workings of the London County Council: but it would have united Irish thought and broken down the barrier which separates the Castle from the League, the politician from the official, the clerical from the anti-clerical, and would thereby tend to the abolition of all "outside" appeal in domestic controversies, to soften that irritation which has done more to keep the two parties and the two peoples apart than any persecution or prejudice. In the end the saner ideas must prevail, and all fear of separation, as well as all hope or desire of it, must evaporate. But we must first come back to the position taken up by Grattan. Ireland looks to the Empire as the great barrier against foreign intervention from the Continent, and as the security of her liberties. Therein lies Ireland's demand for Imperial unity, and therein, and only therein, lies not only the claim but the guarantee of Irish loyalty.

We of the younger generation are tired of the strife, but we will not abandon it till its object is conceded. We wish to see the rise of a New Unionism, based upon Home Rule. We are Unionist Home Rulers,

because we believe that Home Rule is, we cannot say a Unionist, but at least a uniting measure, and we wish to see the two peoples, whose seed has equally populated, whose brains have equally developed, whose blood has been equally shed in defence of the greatest Empire the world has ever seen, understand each other and unite in its maintenance and in its victorious development. There are dangers far ahead; but the greatest of dangers is nearer home, in that misgovernment of centuries which has reduced Ireland by half its population, and produced a hatred of England in Ireland more bitter than that of the foreign nation most hostile to England. It is no threat that is thus uttered; it is purely the calm perception of future contingencies. Never, perhaps, in the whole of English history has the opportunity been more favourable, and the dispositions been more ripe, for the final solution of the great historic grievance between the two peoples, and if this volume can tend to make the understanding of the demand of Mr. John Redmond easier, the author will be amply repaid for his labours.

L. G. REDMOND-HOWARD.

Trinity College, Dublin.

JOHN REDMOND

CHAPTER I

FAMILY—BIRTH—EDUCATION

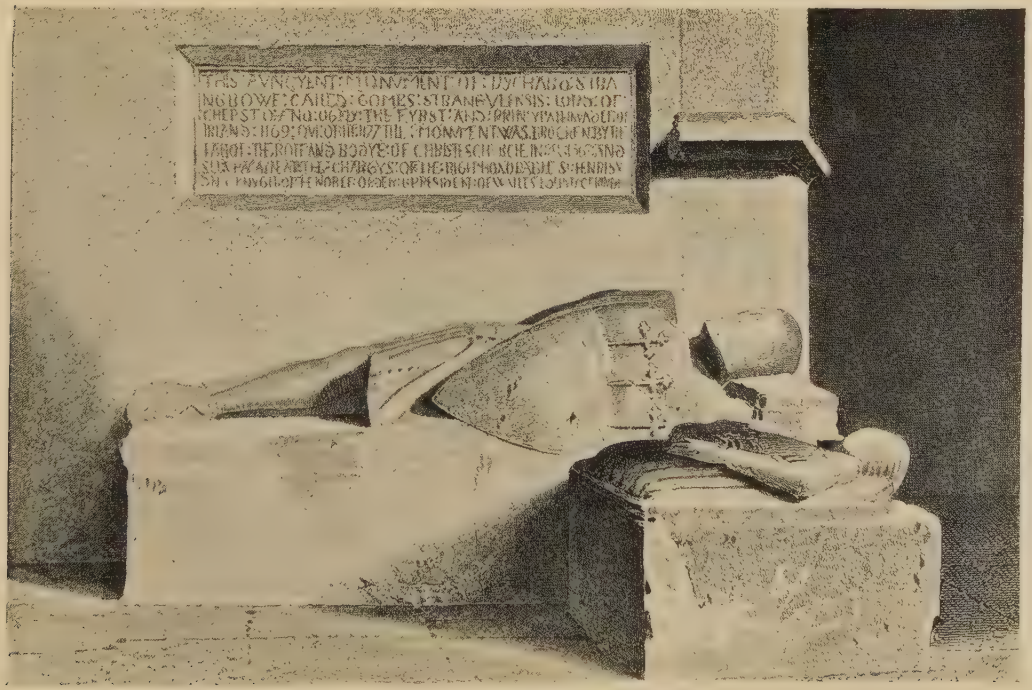
1857—1880

FOR those who seek an explanation of the characteristics and sentiments of the Irish people at the present day and wish to study what might be called the evolution of the Nationalist mind, there is nothing that serves their purpose better than an account of the career of Mr. John Redmond. He not only represents, as Leader of the Irish Party, the politics, but his family to a great extent represents the history, of the Irish problem. Just as the career of many an English county family illustrates one phase or another of the history of England, so the story of the Redmonds may be said to present one whole aspect of the history of Ireland.

To begin with, the Redmonds are not of the old Irish stock; but like the Fitzgeralds and many others of Anglo-Norman descent, they have become *Hibernior Hibernis ipsis*. For who are so Irish as the Wexford

men? And Wexford blood flows in John Redmond's veins, and the Wexford spirit is in his heart. The family have always been in one way or another connected with the town of Wexford from the first day the Normans landed on Irish shores, when Wexford was but a small seaport and the townsfolk half Danish.

The Redmonds are, therefore, one of the oldest, if not the very oldest, of the Anglo-Norman families. John Redmond (who, upon the death of the late General Redmond, became the head of the family and heir to the family estates) is the lineal descendant of one of the Fitzwilliams, known as Raymund le Gros, one of the ablest lieutenants of Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke, and descended—according to a tradition in the family—from the same stock as the celebrated Raymunds, Counts of Toulouse, in France, who figure so prominently in Church history, one of them having led a Crusade, the other, during the Albigenses heresy, having had a crusade preached against him. Strongbow, it will be remembered, had been invited to Ireland by Dermot McMurrough, King of Leinster (whose daughter he afterwards married), and it was this incident that prepared the way for the English invasion of Ireland in 1172. Raymund le Gros was sent over as a kind of advance guard and landed on the first of May, 1170, at Baginbun, a little promontory in the barony of Shelburne, in Wexford. A deep moat and rampart—portion



From an engraving by R. Winkles, after a drawing by George Petrie.

STRONGBOW'S MONUMENT.

[*To face p.* 2.

of Raymund's defences—are still to be seen marking the place where he and his little army of ten men-at-arms and seventy archers had entrenched themselves.

But the conquest of the town was no easy matter. The inhabitants defended themselves stoutly, and the whole incident is the subject of an old ballad, called "The Song of Dermot," which relates that:

> "At the creeke of Banginbunne,
> Ireland was lost and won."

The strangers, however small in numbers, were evidently vigorous in the exercise of their power, and soon cowed the inhabitants into surrender. Several of the prisoners, including many of the chief citizens of Wexford, were hurled from the tops of the rugged cliffs into the sea beneath! The town once taken was kept for the King, and upon the arrival of Henry II. was yielded up to him. He in turn granted it to Strongbow, and some of the estates passed into the family of the Raymunds as part of the dowry of the Lady Basilea, sister of the Earl of Pembroke, who afterwards became the wife of Raymund le Gros. An old two-handed sword of gigantic size was for a long time preserved in the Redmond family as a relic and was said to have been the weapon with which Strongbow had actually cut his son in twain for the crime of cowardice, the weapon being handed down as an heirloom in the

family of the "Redmonds of the Hall." About a century ago, however, the sword was brought to London, since when all trace of it has been lost.

The history of the family from the death of Raymund to the Reformation belongs to county history, but by continual intermarriage they practically became identified with the causes and interests of Ireland. Though loyal, in the political sense of the word, they were not so in the religious sense, and remained true to the faith of their ancestors; and the ruins of the Monastery at Churchtown, near Hook, in Wexford, was for centuries the burial place of the Redmonds, the name, "Eques Hospitabilis" (given to a Sir John Redmond of the sixteenth century), being probably the recognition of a debt of gratitude to their patron on the part of the little community of Canons Regular.

Alexander Redmond, the last to be buried there, was the Alexander Redmond who in 1642 resisted Captain Thomas Aston, who was besieging the castle. He was an old man of about seventy at the time, but, together with his sons and retainers, he defended the Hall "so stoutly that many of the English leaped from the rocks and were drowned." And it remained in their possession till Cromwell arrived, when they capitulated upon honourable terms.

This Alexander Redmond died about 1650, and the greater part of his lands were transferred by the Act of

Settlement from the Papist owner to the Protestant, Sir Nicholas Loftus, by letters patent of August 30th, 1666, and the old castle took the name of Loftus Hall. It was only one of a large number of confiscations, but it is a typical example, and explains the feeling of deep attachment to the Catholic Church which to this day exists in many an Anglo-Irish family, and shows at what a sacrifice the people have kept the faith.

The event is commemorated in the Redmond arms to this day by three woolsacks which—according to the story—had been placed in the windows of the castle, during the struggle. Another topographical point which occurs in the crest of the family is a blazing beacon, such as must often have been seen round the coast of Wexford before the days of Tuscar Lighthouse.

From the times of Cromwell to those of "'98," the family suffered still further from the severity of the penal laws, when an Irish Papist could not possess a horse over five pounds in value, and much of the property of Catholics was held by trust in Protestant hands. The main branch, too, became reduced in one generation to three heiresses, among whom the greater part of the property was divided, and passed into the hands of three baronet families, the "Talbots," the "Powers," and the "Seagraves."

During the rebellion of "'98," Wexford became the centre of the revolt, and the name of Redmond appears

several times in the records. One old print (in two blocks) can still be seen in ancient Wexford houses showing "the beautiful and accomplished Miss Redmond" on horseback leading the rebels. We also hear that a Father Francis Redmond, who had once been the companion of Napoleon's schooldays and shared his room as a student at Bas Poicton, and had even saved him on one occasion from drowning, subsequently suffered death on the scaffold (though apparently a loyalist and a close relative of Lord Mountmorres, whose property he had endeavoured to persuade the rebels to yield up); while several ancestors in the maternal branches of the family were hanged in the cause for which Lord Edward Fitzgerald shed his blood.

From the days when a political career became open to Catholics, the family were always politicians of the type one might call "moderate" Home Rulers, and the first member of Parliament was old John Edward Redmond, to whom a monument was afterwards erected in the town of Wexford, and who was returned in 1859 unopposed, the two rival candidates (Mr. Devereux and Sir Frederick Hughes) having retired in his favour. He, again, was a typical example of the Catholic gentry. He was introduced by the mayor in one of those typical old-fashioned speeches which usually took place on such occasions, but from which we see that he was

above all a representative citizen of a representative family. His father, Walter Redmond, had been the first to deal the fatal blow to the market tithes, which in the case of Wexford were particularly oppressive. Moreover, the family had built a small pier for the vessels in the harbour, had abolished the bridge tolls, and reclaimed much of the low waste land, and were at the time eagerly negotiating for the extension of the railway to open up the West and South as well as to establish the new route now being opened at Rosslare. John Edward Redmond was a Liberal in politics, and an advocate of the removal of all civil and religious disabilities, as well as for a revision of the conditions of the tenants' position, who in those days were not entitled to compensation for improvements.

A generation later, William Archer Redmond, the son of Patrick Walter Redmond (a deputy lieutenant for the County of Wexford), and father of the Leader of the Irish Party, was returned for the borough of Wexford in 1872.

"I can well remember the elder Redmond," writes Mr. Justin McCarthy. "He was a man of the most courteous bearing, polished manners, a man, in fact, of education and extraordinary capacity, who, when he spoke in debate, spoke well and very much to the point, and he was highly esteemed by all parties in the House."

He was educated at Stonyhurst College, also at Bonn, and took his degree at Trinity, Dublin. He was an ardent "Home Ruler," and attended the famous Home Rule Conference of 1873, at which he proposed many of the important resolutions. He was also a temperance reformer. He seconded the resolution in favour of the re-enactment and extension of the Sunday Closing Act in Ireland, and was a constant attendant at the meetings in London of the "League of the Cross," a total abstinence organization founded by Cardinal Manning. He was a continuous and valuable contributor to the *Tablet*, which review, when he died in November, 1880, wrote of him:—

"He was a man of large and cultivated intellect, refined and sensitive nature, and his fearless assertion of principle was ever combined with a heart ever sensible of warm and generous emotions."

"In reference to the question of legislative independence," he wrote in his election address in 1872, "which now occupies the attention of the country under the name of Home Rule, I will at once declare my conviction that Ireland possesses the indefeasible right to be governed by an Irish Parliament. That right has never been forfeited or surrendered, and I hold that the restoration of Home Rule is absolutely essential to the good government of the country, to the development of its resources, to the removal of the wasting curse of

absenteeism and to the final establishment in peace and liberty of the Irish race upon Irish soil. I am convinced that ample means exist to achieve this result within the limits of the Constitution, and without infringing upon our loyalty to the throne, I differ entirely from those who would say that union amongst Irishmen is impossible, and that they do not possess sufficient public virtue to enable them to manage their own affairs."

Such, then, is the history of the family from which John Edward Redmond sprang. The eldest son of W. A. Redmond, the member for Wexford, who had married a daughter of General Hoey, he was born in 1857, and spent most of his early years at Ballytrent House, an old family mansion on the coast of Wexford, overlooking the sea and facing Tuscar Lighthouse. They were a family of four, comprising two daughters, one of whom became a nun of the Order of Marie Réparatrice at Harley House, while the other married an English Australian of New South Wales, Mr. Louis George Howard (the present writer's father), and two sons—John, the eldest, and another, William Hoey Kearney Redmond, who at first served in the Army, and later became the member for East Clare.

From boyhood to manhood, therefore, John Redmond lived in Wexford, and the history of his own family, as

well as the history of the county, furnish the best explanation of his mental attitude towards England and all things English.

He feels precisely as a member of an English county family feels, a personal pride in his country. Each of the great political movements has a special personal meaning to him. The attitude he takes, therefore, is greatly, as I have said, representative: that is, it is the attitude of those who starved for a principle and suffered for a principle. If he is looked upon as a revolutionist, even as a bigot, the cause is not to be sought in the individual but lies at the root of the System that has caused that revolution and that bigotry. And if this principle were only borne in mind and the Irish grievances were examined instead of being denounced, it would be found that nearly every Nationalist sentiment is at the bottom but the statement of an economic truth.

"For myself," he says (speaking of the influence of history upon his character), "the rising of Wexford County in '98 is one which from my very earliest youth has exercised a powerful fascination upon my mind. This is but natural. I had been reared and nurtured in the midst of the hills and valleys that witnessed the struggles of '98; I had been taught to regard every scene as a monument of the heroism of our forefathers, and to remember that well nigh every sod beneath my

feet marked a hero's sepulchre. My boyish ears had listened to the tales of '98 from the lips of old men who had themselves witnessed the struggles, and I scarcely know a family who cannot tell of a father or grandfather or some near relative who died fighting at Wexford, at Oulart, or Ross. Every scene most familiar to my early youth was associated with some tale of heroism or suffering, and one of my proudest recollections has ever been, as it is to-day, that in that dark hour of trial, there were not wanting men of my race and name who attested by their lives to their devotion to Ireland!"

From the very first John Redmond showed signs of exceptional ability. He was very fond of literature, as well as sports and hunting, and became the object of his father's special care and attention, who, as soon as he was sufficiently prepared, sent him to the Irish Jesuit College of Clongowes, in Kildare. "All I am I owe to the Jesuit fathers," Redmond once declared at a public banquet at the Hotel Cecil.

At Clongowes he is well remembered by his old masters even to this day. The recollections of one of them I am now allowed to include. His debates used to empty the billiard-rooms then as they often now do the smoking-rooms of the House of Commons!

"All through his time in Clongowes," writes the aforesaid mentor, "there was no more prominent boy.

At the very beginning the high compliment was paid him of getting through two classes in one year. Even then he gave promise of excellence in speaking and writing English. Even in his elocution (and he was the best of all Professor Bell's pupils) his action was well nigh perfect. He impressed one with what he was saying—he caught one. And on the stage these peculiar gifts were seen to far greater advantage. In *Charles XII.*, for instance, in *The Iron Chest*, *Macbeth*, and *Hamlet* he always took the leading parts and played and looked these parts to the life. The present Judge Barry was a contemporary of his and made an excellent and effective Macduff to Redmond's Macbeth!"

"He had a very kind and easy way about him," writes a schoolfellow. "I never knew of anyone to dislike him, and as his old school is proud of him, so he has ever been loyal to his Alma Mater. Also, I may add, he had the reputation of being one of the most religious boys in the school!"

An interview which I had with his old master, however, will, perhaps, give more insight into his character than any mere abstract analysis.

"When I went to Clongowes myself as a master," said Father Kane—the old mentor in question—"in the autumn of 1870, John Redmond was in the fourth Form. He had been at Clongowes for some years before I had charge of his class. It was a large class and, I

may say, a rowdy class. And when I say 'rowdy,' I mean rowdy *even* for an Irish class. In fact, they had already had twelve respective masters, and so I had to be severe. Indeed, there was continual disorder, and they were somewhat out of hand. But not so John Redmond. He was always a gentleman, and he was extremely courteous to me.

"For instance, I remember once we had trouble in the class. I forget exactly what the occasion was. Perhaps, no practical grievance, but merely the old spirit. And, after all, boys love a 'lark.' This time, however, it had gone beyond a lark, the boy having openly revolted and been downright insolent. The class looked on to see what would happen, evidently expecting a crisis. There was none, since I reduced the culprit to tears by my subsequent lecture.

"But my self-restraint had evidently impressed them, and that the young fellow's impudence had evidently lost him the sympathy of his class-mates was evident from the fact that John Redmond came up to me afterwards and said almost reproachfully—'Why didn't you knock him down, sir?'"

"What sort of a student was he?" I asked.

"Well, it is rather hard to say. He had many interests. He loved literature, he could recite poems and quote passages of Byron and Shelley, and especially Shakespeare, by heart, but John Gannon, who came to

Clongowes about this time, was more of a plodder, and eventually 'took him down.' In fact, comparing them, one might describe Jack as being 'almost lazy'—not idle but dreamy, 'literary' and dilettante. Towards the 'exams,' however, he would make up for lost time, and by sheer ability account for his apparent lack of industry during previous terms.

"In English he was by far at his best, and his essays were always well ahead of those of the other scholars. It was not mere superficial knowledge (for he always had an extraordinary memory), so much as the elevated and dignified way he had of looking at any given subject which struck me. And when there was a 'Consultatio,' or public display, I often made him read out his own essays publicly, some of which I still have among my papers."

"What would you say was the chief point in his character?" I inquired.

"I should say his 'maturity.' He had been matured by his home life and his devotion to both his parents and sisters. His father, William Archer Redmond, who was the member for Wexford, used often to come to see his son, and was always full of interest in his doings. And 'Jack' always seemed to have a grand, old-fashioned respect for his father, and thus he acquired part of his father's refinement and polish, and the close intimacy between them gave him a

maturity of mind which at once placed him in a different category to that of his companions.

"About the same time he began to make his mark on the stage and in the debate. As to the stage, he was the greatest actor that was ever seen at Clongowes. It was in the year 1871 that he first played Macbeth. The next year he played Hamlet, which was even a more marked success than his Macbeth of the year before.

"His other forte—though he was an all-round-man—was essentially the debate. He was awarded the Clongowes debate medal—which, as you know, is given every year to the best speaker—and if ever anyone deserved it and had proved himself worthy of it, it was John Redmond. The Debating Society was much what it is everywhere in colleges all the world over—semi-parliamentary, semi-academic. Daniel O'Connell had been a great admirer of the Clongowes Debating Society, and no doubt the memory of his stirring words had encouraged many young aspirants like Jack. He was wont to come down from Dublin to listen and to take the chair. He would sometimes speak, too, and the records of his words must have been still in existence in the days of Redmond. They all perished, however, in the great fire when the study hall was burnt down and the Minutes Book was destroyed. Father Fegan, who was later higher-line Prefect, was Redmond's chief rival, and both these

fiery leaders would wax eloquent anent the respective merits of Cicero or Demosthenes, and rouse their followers to equal pitches of enthusiasm. Later, however, under the guidance of John Redmond, the debates ceased to have that mere academic value, and their energies were turned into more useful directions, and questions of Irish history, as well as topics of current politics, were introduced; and not a little of Redmond's experience and skill is due to the training which he received in the Clongowes Debating Society, before he sailed forth to measure swords with the mighty orators of the British House of Commons.

"Besides the ordinary debates there were also the public debates. For example, on Academy Day, when all the guests and parents would come down to Clongowes, then John Redmond *really* shone. In addition to the public debate I would induce him to recite a Latin ode or declaim one of Cicero's speeches.

"Redmond was also exceedingly good at games, and was greatly loved and respected by his companions, as, indeed, he was by his superiors. A first-rate bowler and a smart batsman, he was, in his last year, elected Vice-Captain of the school. His father, whom I knew very well, used often to come down. Once I met the twain and found Jack sporting some magnificent cigars, a present from his father. Being then in my private and not my official capacity, I ventured to suggest that if

he wished to enjoy them to the full he had better smoke them then and there, despite the immediate proximity of the school. He took my advice; though I firmly believe it was the only advice of mine he ever repented of taking.

"Another point strikes me, now that I am talking of advice. He was the favourite and pet pupil of Bell, the great elocutionist. Bell was a big, pompous man who wore his hair down on his shoulders, and walked with a martial strut. He was the regular type of the old-fashioned school of a century ago, the *reductio ad absurdum* of Burke, a regular pompous orator, who would no doubt have gone down very well with our grandfathers, but who to-day would be looked upon as a mere bombastic nonentity. Bell was always fond of getting John Redmond under his direction, and probably much of the former's elocution had been rehearsed between them.

"'Listen to all he's got to say, John,' I often told him, 'and don't do anything he says. You do it better yourself.' And I believe he did.

"It is hard to say whether any of us ever dreamed that he might acquire the position he now occupies. It was only the other day I read in one of the leading political papers that were he to throw in his lot with Liberal or Conservative, he would most certainly become Prime Minister of England! But, of course, all that is

mere speculation, and to me is only significant as a tribute to the character and the abilities of the dearest of my old pupils.

"I can only say this—that while they are in the hands of John Redmond, the destinies of Ireland are safe, as far as ability of mind and nobility of character are concerned. I have known him from a boy, and I say again, as long as the destinies of Ireland are in his hands they are in the keeping of an honest man."

It is a pleasant remembrance, and when upon St. Patrick's Day, 1908, Father Kane stood up in the banqueting hall of the Hotel Cecil and gave a few of his recollections, the audience were moved to see the evident pride of the old master, then almost completely blind, when he spoke of his favourite pupil.

Upon leaving Clongowes John Redmond spent some time as a "philosopher," as those students who had passed through the curriculum and returned were called. These privileged ones had their private rooms and were allowed to keep their dogs, and occasionally were permitted to shoot. But this did not last long, and he went up to Dublin, and, entering Trinity College, took rooms in Botany Bay. He did not stay to get his degree. Most of his energies seem to have been devoted to getting through his "Bar" exams, and following the lectures at the King's Inns, at Dublin.

The following recollection is from one of his fellow

students, and is given in W. T. Stead's character sketch of him:

"I first made John Redmond's acquaintance," wrote Mr. W. M. Cook in 1901, "some sixteen or eighteen years ago, when we were law students together at the King's Inns, in Dublin. It will surprise most people, I am sure, to learn that my earliest impressions of him were as a temperance reformer. The Irish National movement has always been closely associated with the drink traffic, and in the atmosphere of an Irish Protestant home the two are closely connected in thought. It is impossible to convey to anyone not brought up in that atmosphere how strict is the caste system that prevails in Ireland. There is nothing like it in England; nothing like it anywhere in the Empire except India. It was the fact that Mr. Redmond was almost a total abstainer that first brought us together. The meeting was in this wise:

"It was the custom for the students of King's Inns to dine in messes of six. A fixed quantity of wine per head was allowed to each table, and thereby students, of whom there were a few, always sought diligently for totally abstaining acquaintances to join their mess. As I did not drink wine, I found myself in great demand, and on one occasion the same mess captured John Redmond also. As he never took more than half a glass of wine at dinner this table regarded

itself lucky as having six bottles of wine for four persons, and I had the privilege of being introduced to Mr. Redmond."

The story, though trivial, is characteristic. It shows in part the influence of the father, and it shows also the chief note in Mr. Redmond's character—*i.e.*, an avoidance of extreme measures, of faddists and idealists, and a power of self-control that can say—"thus far and no farther."

It was some years before he was called to the Bar, nor did he at once take his degree. He proceeded to London, partly to help his father, who suffered from heart disease, and partly to prepare himself for a political career, and for a time he occupied the position of a clerk in the Vote Office in the House of Commons. Later he became a contributor to the *Weekly Register*, for which he used to write the Parliamentary letter. A story told by Wilfred Meynell (then editor) of Lord Russell of Killowen is amusing. There was not a little of the Tory spirit in some quarters of the Redmond family, and the late Lord Russell knew this. And when, as Attorney-General, he learned of the humble weekly sovereign that used to be John Redmond's modest reward, he exclaimed: "My God! You don't mean to say the fellow *took* it?" "Better men have taken less," was the reply of the veteran journalist! "and worse have taken more."

CHAPTER II

FIRST YEARS IN PARLIAMENT

1880—1890

PUBLIC LIFE—ELECTION—COLONIAL TOURS

IT was probably as a clerk in the Vote Office of the House of Commons that John Redmond obtained his first lessons in parliamentary procedure. It was a position worth about £300 a year and was chiefly concerned with the preparation of documents and the distribution of the agenda papers. It was in the gift of the Speaker, and usually led to the highest positions in the official staff of the House. Here, as son of the member for Wexford as well as in his official capacity, he was brought into close touch with the Irish Party, though not perhaps with Parnell, its leader.

For when his father died, according to Mr. T. M. Healy, and he was requested by his constituents, with whom he was familiar from boyhood, to stand for the seat, Parnell, to whom he had written to announce his intention of putting up for that constituency, did not for the moment appear to remember him. Parnell showed

the letter to Mr. Healy, saying, "Who is this chap?" "Don't you remember young Redmond that hands us out the programmes!" returned Mr. Healy. "What! *that* damned fellow," was the leader's remark on the young man who was later to be his champion. Whatever the rest of the conversation was Mr. Healy does not say; but as a result Parnell asked the aspiring member to stand aside in favour of his own friend, Mr. Healy, who was then being prosecuted for a speech in his native town supporting some evicted tenants, and his return, it was thought, would be a blow to the Government.

Mr. Redmond retired, and though had there been a contest he would probably have been returned, he made one of his first speeches shortly after his father's funeral in favour of Mr. Healy. But it must be admitted that his rival returned the compliment when the next vacancy occurred some months later, by suggesting to the Irish leader, "Why not return Redmond?"

Accordingly—early in 1881—Mr. John Redmond, law student, became candidate for New Ross. Captain William Redmond, his brother, then in the Militia, according to another unkind story told by Mr. T. M. Healy, sent a telegram from the barracks in Wexford to the effect, "For God's sake don't disgrace the family by joining the Land League and Parnell." But the Land League he did join and Parnell too, for whom he had already, it appears, shed his blood.

The occasion was at Enniscorthy shortly after Parnell had returned from America in 1880. A noisy crowd of some five thousand, led by priests, were against Parnell. They would not allow him to speak; he was struck on the face with a rotten egg; one leg of his trousers was rent from top to bottom. Redmond was subsequently walking with Parnell when he was knocked down by the mob and his face cut. "What's the matter?" said the leader when they rejoined each other at the railway station. John Redmond told him what had happened. "Well, you have shed your blood for me, at all events," was the reply. Probably this was one of the first links that bound the two, for Mr. Redmond's father had been more of a disciple of Butt, the predecessor of Parnell in the leadership of the Irish Party, Parnell being only a rising man when the elder Redmond died.

"When I entered Parliament," said Mr. Redmond in New York, reviewing the situation some years later, "the British public was in the very midst of one of the most desperate of the Irish crises. An Irish leader had arisen who had taken a new way of obtaining redress for Ireland. Mr. Parnell found that the British Parliament insisted upon turning a deaf ear to Ireland's claim for justice. He resolved to adopt the simple yet masterly device of preventing Parliament doing any work until it consented to listen. In this policy

he was successful. He was the first man who, as Wendell Phillips afterwards said of him in Boston, made John Bull listen to the voice of Ireland.

"The task he had undertaken was a desperate one, and at first all the odds were against him. He was in a small minority in his own party. Isaac Butt, the leader of the Irish Party, a great orator and constitutional lawyer, commanded the allegiance of four-fifths of the Home Rule members and had denounced the new policy as 'mischievous and insane.' Parnell himself was young, inexperienced, not gifted with an Irish fluency of speech, but on the contrary weighted with a halting delivery almost painful to listen to. All the men of brilliant Parliamentary talent amongst the Irish members were against him. On his side were only a handful of young, untried and inexperienced members. More than all, perhaps, he had the unwritten laws and traditions of the House of Commons to combat. On the other hand, however, he had to sustain him, the sympathy of the masses of the Irish people, and he speedily found within the four corners of the rules and orders of the House, ample room to obstruct public business and to paralyse the legislative machine. ....Nothing was too great or too small a question for discussion. . . ."

All this was witnessed with beating heart by the people of Ireland. Hope in Parliamentary action

revived, and day by day Mr. Parnell's power grew. Mr. Butt had died, his successor, Mr. Shaw, was politically a cipher, and the General Election of 1880 saw Parnell safely installed as the leader of the Irish Nationalist Party, and his policy enthusiastically adopted by the people.

It was with this new party of new men that John Redmond threw in his lot when he put up for the borough of New Ross. The election was quiet and uncontested; and Mr. Redmond's speech short and to the point.

There was a crisis in Irish history, he told his constituents. There was no such thing as constitutional government in Ireland, though England posed as the champion of liberty. The Coercion Bill was an open declaration of war upon every man in Ireland. The duty of a nation menaced with such a measure was plain—resistance by every means in their power. To meet this, force was impossible. He, therefore, advised passive, but stern, unflinching moral resistance, and such a work was in his eyes righteous and holy, and he said that, as far as he was concerned, he would, if elected, go to Parliament filled with the desire to give expression to their eternal hatred of foreign rule, and their determination to stand by the present agitation until the land of Ireland was free, and if necessary to suffer as their fathers had suffered before

them rather than desist from the holy enterprise in which the manhood of Ireland was engaged.

As there was no contest, there was little demonstration, save in the evening, when the local brass bands and fife-and-drum bands paraded the streets. And after Mr. Redmond had addressed his constituents again from the window of Father Furlong's house, the crowd dispersed quietly, and went off to their homes, having given a few cheers, though they had to be reminded to do so. "But," added the local journal, as if to censure the apathy of the inhabitants of New Ross, "a magnificent display of the phenomenon known as the Aurora Borealis was visible that night in the town!"

In Wexford, however, the native town of the family, the news of the election of John Edward Redmond, law student, of 40, Charlwood Street, Belgrave Road, London, was received with the wildest exultation. Tar barrels blazed in every direction, and crowds assembled round the monument erected to the new member's father, and sang the "Boys of Wexford"; while the inevitable brass, fife and temperance bands paraded the streets till the early hours of the morning.

"I have no hesitation," said the Rev. P. M. Furlong, C.C., introducing the young Trinity undergraduate, "in saying that in Mr. Redmond we shall have a representative still more in sympathy, if possible, with the feelings of his constituents, and the Irish people, than

our late representative, and I am sure we will find in him a standard-bearer fully qualified to bear with honour to us and credit to himself the banner of our ancient borough. Though young in political life," he continued, "Mr. Redmond is not inexperienced in political life. He is active, and is gifted with much intellectual power, and a high degree of eloquence. He comes from an ancient Wexford stock whom even the breath of calumny has never ventured to stain, and, above all, he is filled with a generous devotion to the cause of Ireland and to our illustrious leader, Charles Stewart Parnell."

The estimate of character has proved accurate, for if there is anything which could be said to be synonymous with "Redmondism" it is the whole-hearted patriotism and an almost fierce attachment to the leader which distinguished Mr. Redmond in after years.

The account of his first experience in the House was rather dramatic and is best told in Mr. Redmond's own words to an American audience.

"At the moment when the sheriff declared me duly elected, the House of Commons had already been sitting continuously for some twenty-four hours. The brunt of the fight against the Coercion Bill was being borne by some dozen of Mr. Parnell's most active supporters; and they were looking anxiously for my election to send them a recruit. I received a wire

urging me not to lose an hour in crossing to Westminster. I started at once, and travelled all night to London. On my way I received another wire saying the House was still sitting. I reached London about seven o'clock on a dark and cold winter's morning and drove straight from the station to the House of Commons.

"And it was thus, travel-stained and weary, that I first presented myself as a member of the British Parliament. The House was still sitting, it had been sitting without a break for over forty hours, and I shall never forget the appearance the chamber presented. The floor was littered with paper. A few dishevelled and weary Irishmen were on one side of the House, about a hundred infuriated Englishmen upon the other; some of them still in evening dress, and wearing what once were white shirts of the night before last. Mr. Parnell was upon his legs, with pale cheeks and drawn face, his hands clenched behind his back, facing without flinching a continuous roar of interruption. It was now about eight o'clock. Half of Mr. Parnell's followers were out of the chamber snatching a few moments' sleep in chairs in the library or smoke-room. Those who remained had each a specified period of time allotted to him to speak, and they were wearily waiting their turn. As they caught sight of me standing at the bar of the House of Commons there was a cheer of welcome. I was unable to come to their aid, how-

ever, as under the rules of the House I could not take my seat until the commencement of a new sitting. My very presence, however, brought, I think, a sense of encouragement and approaching relief to them, and I stood there at the bar with my travelling coat still upon me, gazing alternately with indignation and admiration at the amazing scene presented to my gaze.

"This, then, was the great Parliament of England! Of intelligent debate there was none. It was one unbroken scene of turbulence and disorder. The few Irishmen remained quiet, too much amused, perhaps, or too much exhausted to retaliate. It was the English—the members of the first assembly of gentlemen in Europe, as they love to style it—who howled and roared, and almost foamed at the mouth with rage at the calm and pale-featured young man who stood patiently facing them, and endeavouring from time to time to make himself heard.

"The galleries were filled with strangers every whit as excited as the members, and even the Ladies' Gallery contained its dozen or so of eager spectators. No one knew what was going to happen. There was no power under the rules of the House to stop the debate, consequently it had resolved itself into a question of physical endurance, and it seemed as if the Irishmen battling for the liberties of their country were capable of resisting until the impotence of the House of

Commons had covered it with the contempt and ridicule of Europe.

"At last the end came suddenly and unexpectedly. At eight o'clock Mr. Speaker Brand, from a sense of duty, as he said, and acting on his own responsibility, and in defiance of the rules of the House, ordered the debate to cease.

"The Irish members endeavoured to protest by speech against this proceeding, and failing in the attempt, they rose in their seats, and left the chamber in a body shouting 'Privilege,' a cry not heard in that place since Charles I. attempted to invade the liberty of Parliament. So ended the first battle over this Coercion Bill, the net result being that England found, in order to suspend the constitution in Ireland, she was obliged to destroy the most cherished tradition and most precious possession of her Parliament: the freedom of speech of its members!

"The following day my membership of the House of Commons actually commenced, and I had an experience, I believe, absolutely unique in Parliamentary history. I took my oath and my seat, made my maiden speech, and was suspended and expelled from the House for the rest of the sitting—all in the same evening! It was not of my choosing; I had the distinction thrust upon me. It occurred in this way:

"The excitement of the previous day had been

intensified by the news of the arrest of Mr. Davitt in Ireland. Mr. Dillon had endeavoured to extract some explanation from the Government and had been named and suspended, and then Mr. Parnell, on the Prime Minister rising to speak, moved: 'That Mr. Gladstone be not heard.'"

What occurred afterwards was thus described by an English writer of the time. The Speaker ruled that Mr. Gladstone was in possession of the House, whereupon Mr. Parnell, rising amidst cheers from the Irish members, moved that Mr. Gladstone "be not heard." The Speaker again calling upon Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Parnell shouted out, "I insist upon my motion being put." The Speaker, having warned Mr. Parnell that his conduct was wilfully obstructive, again called on Mr. Gladstone, who had not proceeded beyond his first sentence when Mr. Parnell, rising excitedly, insisted upon his right to be heard. "I name Mr. Parnell as disregarding the authority of the Chair," said the Speaker. Mr. Gladstone moved his suspension. The House was cleared for a division in the usual manner, but the Irish members remained seated, Mr. R. Power, the Whip, walking round and round as a shepherd's dog guards a flock of sheep. Mr. A. M. Sullivan shouted out: "We contest the legality of the proceeding," and the Speaker, after the division, reported the matter to the House.

"For this refusal to vote," continues Mr. Redmond, "the Irish members were suspended, myself among the number. Having been suspended, we each in turn refused to leave the chamber, and, addressing the Speaker, protested against the entire proceeding, and intimated that unless superior force was employed, we should resist. That was my maiden speech! Superior force, in the shape of the Sergeant-at-Arms and his merry men, was then applied, and eventually each one of us was escorted under arrest from our seats, and thus, as I have said, my Parliamentary career opened with the unique experience of taking my seat, making my maiden speech, and being expelled by force from the chamber on the same evening."

After the excitement of this first experience had died down John Redmond set himself to study his new duties at once, and with just the same ardour and success as he had displayed in his school days and at Trinity.

He did not at once come forward as a speaker, however, for his first duties were those of Whip. "J. Redmond," writes Mr. Justin McCarthy, "was a man admirably suited for such work. He had an excellent education. He had the polished manners of good society. He belonged to what I may call the 'country gentleman' order and could ride to hounds with a horsemanship which must have won the hearts of the Tory squires

from the hunting counties, and above all, he had an excellent capacity and memory for all matters of arrangement and detail." And again, "It was a great part of Parnell's policy that there should be a powerful Home Rule organization extending over all parts of Great Britain, founding institutions in all the principal cities and towns and addressing audiences indoor and out on the subject of Ireland's demand for domestic self-government. John Redmond soon became one of the most effective organizers of the new movement, and one of the most powerful pleaders of the Cause on the public platform."

His own enthusiasm he communicated to the young men of the English and Scotch cities, and even to his colleagues. In these earlier days the Parnellite party did not number more than a dozen or so of members, and as it was not uncommon for some of them to deliver ten speeches of an evening, the young member was kept pretty busy, the duty of selecting and putting up the men devolving, of course, upon the Whip. But though an arduous post, it gave him a very thorough knowledge not only of the rules of the House, in which he was already well versed, but also of the moods of the House, which it usually takes a man years to discover. And gradually, as the success of the outside organization began to bear fruit and the disciplined forces of the Irish members inside began to have

some effect, the young Whip found he had to shepherd a party of some ninety odd members. But at first he was looked upon rather as a platform than as a Parliamentary orator; and it was probably for this reason that Parnell singled him out later for the Australian and American tours.

Nevertheless he was entrusted with very responsible work, especially when Parnell was in prison together with many of the other Irish members, including Mr. William Redmond, who by this time had joined the Nationalist forces. The Kilmainham treaty, by which Mr. Parnell was released, signified, as all admit, a moral victory for the Parnellites. It admitted the failure of Coercion, and Forster, its chief advocate, was dropped out of the Ministry. "The first indication of the coming resolves of the Government," writes T. P. O'Connor, in "The Parnell Movement," "was the reception given by Mr. Gladstone to the new Land Bill brought in by Mr. Redmond on behalf of the Irish party." He had had every assistance from his chief, for the Bill was drafted inside the very walls of the prison.

It proposed the remission of the arrears which blocked the way to the benefits conferred by the Land Act, but in such a just, moderate way that Gladstone practically promised to deal with the subject almost immediately. Then on May 6th, 1882, came the Phœnix Park murders—one of those great catastrophes

which seem by some irony of fate to come just when a spirit of conciliation among Englishmen has given birth to a new era of hope in Ireland. There was a cry for Coercion, and Ministers felt that unless Coercion was dealt out with a liberal hand they could not hold office for twenty-four hours.

To John Redmond it was no doubt a great blow, expectant as he must have been of the possibilities for good contained in his Bill; but still greater must have been the shock when he heard himself being described as approving of the murders.

"I was at Manchester" (to quote his own account) "on the night of the Phœnix Park murders, and about to address a meeting at the time, when an incomplete account of the affair was thrust into my hand as I was on my way to the building. I learned that Cavendish and Spencer had been killed. I went to the police station to make inquiries, but they would not tell me anything. I made a speech condemning the murder of Cavendish, and saying that the Government were the real cause of the crime. *The Times* reported my speech with the comment that I said nothing about Burke. Parnell spoke to me on the subject. I told him I did not know that Burke had been killed when I made the speech. 'Then write to *The Times* and say so,' he replied. I wrote to *The Times*, but they did not publish it."

It appears, from further correspondence that ensued that *The Times* had not received it. At all events, that was the answer given.

The next few years were, therefore, times of trial and suffering for Nationalists, not only in England and Ireland, but all over the world, and it became necessary to organize meetings everywhere to defend the party against the charge that they were morally responsible for the murders. From every platform they had been denounced. *The Times* had published a series of articles on Parnellism and Crime; and nothing but a vigorous campaign could undo the havoc wrought by the Press in bringing the Nationalist cause into disrepute. It therefore became a question of choice of the speakers most suitable for the work, and chief among these was the young member for New Ross, who was singled out, not only for his already growing reputation as a speaker, but for his singular "moderation," to conduct a mission in Australia. Thomas Brennan, one of the most violent leaders of the Land League, and one who had denounced Parnell himself as "past," was refused point blank when he asked to be sent to Australia. The Australian mission is thus described by Michael Davitt:

"In 1882 the organization had spread into most of the Australian Colonies, and it became necessary to send out some prominent leader whose representative posi-

tion would appeal with greater effect to supporters and members of the Press. The late Rev. George W. Pepper, of Ohio, U.S.A., was recommended to Parnell by American League leaders for the mission, but a better and a happier choice than that of the Ohio Irish American was made in the person of Mr. John E. Redmond. The member for New Ross had already made his mark in the House of Commons as an eloquent and able debater, and he was in every sense qualified to perform the work required.

"He was joined later by his brother, Mr. W. H. K. Redmond. They were joined on their arrival by Mr. J. W. Walshe, and forthwith undertook an organizing tour which succeeded beyond anticipations. Mr. Redmond's arrival coincided cruelly with the examination of the Invincibles who were implicated in the Phœnix Park murders. The evidence of the informer, Carey, hinting a complicity in these crimes of certain prominent Land Leaguers, was cabled to the Australian Press and created such anti-Irish feeling in the newspapers and among the general public that no public halls except those owned by Irish organizations could be obtained for the meetings of the boycotted envoys. So rabid did the feeling become under the daily incitations of a bigoted press, that Mr. (afterwards Sir) Henry Parkes, one of the most prominent New South Wales politicians, actually proposed the expulsion of the Messrs.

Redmond from the Colonies. Even hotels refused to give them accommodation.

"Staunch men of his own race stood by Mr. Redmond in Sydney and in other cities, and his own courage, tact, and admirable capacity enabled him to bear down all opposition. His was one of the most difficult of the many missions undertaken on behalf of the movement led by Parnell, and no man ever acquitted himself more creditably and more completely under the fire of a relentless, hostile Press and in the face of a violent public sentiment than the then comparatively young Irishman did in his Australian tour."

This account coincides with Mr. Redmond's own, given in Mr. Barry O'Brien's life of Parnell.

"When I arrived at Sydney the Phœnix Park murders were the talk of the Colony," he wrote. "I received a chilling reception. All the respectable people who had promised support kept away. The priests would not help me, except the Jesuits, who were friendly to me as an old Clongowes boy. A leading citizen who had promised to take the chair at my first meeting would not come. Sir Henry Parkes, the Prime Minister, proposed that I should be expelled from the Colony, but the motion was defeated.

"The Irish working men stood by me, and in fact saved the situation. They kept me going until a telegram arrived exculpating the Parliamentary party.

Then all the Irish gradually came around and ultimately flocked to my meetings. I collected £15,000, and went to America. Fenians did everything for us there. Without them we could have done nothing. I addressed a great meeting at the Opera House, Chicago. Boyle O'Reilly was in the chair. There were 10,000 people present. It was a grand sight. It was grand to see the Irish united as they were then. I was escorted to the meeting by the Governor and the Mayor, and the streets were lined with soldiers, who presented arms as we passed."

His speeches on these tours, afterwards reprinted in his "Historical and Political Addresses," are certainly good examples of the defence of the Irish cause and very clear expositions of the Irish demands. One particularly, that delivered in Melbourne on the 13th June, 1883, as to whether the Land League was really responsible for crime, deserves notice; and another at Adelaide on the objects of the Irish National League. In these he examined the charges one by one and refuted them, quoting from Mr. Parnell's manifesto the following words:—

"We earnestly hope that the attitude and action of the Irish people will show to the world that an assassination such as has startled us almost to the abandonment of hope of our country's future is deeply and religiously abhorrent to their every feeling and instinct;" and again

Mr. Parnell's own words: "The knife that killed Lord Frederick Cavendish came near killing with the same blow the Land League. We were at that time in a splendid position. We were in some sort arbitrators of the situation when, four days after our liberation, Lord Frederick Cavendish was assassinated. By that act nearly all the ground we had gained was lost."

For nearly a year the two brothers stayed in Australia, and it was while in Sydney that they both met their future wives: Mr. John Redmond marrying, in 1883, Johanna Dalton, the daughter of Mr. Michael Dalton, and his brother marrying her cousin, the daughter of Mr. James Dalton, a prominent Sydney man.

While they were in Australia the danger was to avoid being too disloyal: in America the danger was to avoid being too loyal! But in spite of the garbled quotations from his American speeches which can be seen scattered through Mr. Chamberlain's denunciations of Home Rule, and which even now form matter for building up of such articles as "The two Mr. J. Redmonds," there is a wonderful consistency between the two sets of speeches. In both, while appealing to the loyalty of the Colonies and the nationalism of the United States, he avoids extremes and strikes the golden mean. He is neither a Unionist nor a Fenian, but simply a Parnellite; and perhaps he never so clearly expressed that harmony which exists between the Federal aim and the National

aspirations as he did in these American speeches. In some passages he seemed to gather the whole of Irish history and politics as it were into a nutshell. One in particular is worth quoting at length.

"The principle embodied in the Irish movement of to-day," he said, "is just the same principle which was the soul of every Irish movement for the last seven hundred years—the principle of rebellion against the rule of strangers: the principle which Owen Roe O'Neill vindicated at Benburb: which animated Tone and Fitzgerald, and to which Emmet sacrificed a stainless life. Let no man desecrate that principle by giving it the ignoble name of hatred of England. Race hatred is at best an unreasoning passion. I for one believe in the brotherhood of nations, and bitter as the memory is of past wrongs and present injustice inflicted upon our people by our alien rulers, I assert the principle underlying our movement is not the principle of revenge for the past, but of justice for the future. When a question of that principle arises there can be no such thing as compromise. The Irish leader who would propose to compromise the national claims of Ireland, who would even incline for one second to accept as a settlement of our demand any concession short of the unquestioned recognition of that nationality which has come down to us sanctified by the blood and tears of centuries, would forfeit all claims upon your confidence or support.

Such a contingency can never arise; for the man who would be traitor enough to propose such a course would find himself no longer a leader. No man can barter away the honour of a nation. The one great principle of any settlement of the Irish question must be the recognition of the divine right of Irishmen, and Irishmen alone, to rule Ireland. This is the principle in support of which you are assembled to-day: this is the principle which guides our movement in Ireland. But consistently with that principle we believe it is possible to bring about a settlement honourable to England and Ireland alike, whereby the wrongs and miseries of the past may be forgotten, whereby the chapter of English wrongs and of Irish resistance may be closed, and whereby a future of freedom and of amity between the two nations may be inaugurated. Such a settlement we believe was offered to us by Mr. Gladstone."

He was not sparing, it is true, in his attacks upon English rule, but neither did he allow himself to be carried away by meaningless vituperation or too significant vindictiveness. He stood where the Canadians stood in 1839, for the two principles of religious liberty and political independence. "If at the bidding of England Ireland had abandoned her religion," he told his hearers, "and consented to merge her nationality, she could have been to-day the sleekest of slaves, fattened by the

bounty of our conquerors." The words were perhaps bitter; but were they too strong, I wonder, bearing in mind the hundreds of thousands of martyrs to Irish freedom, the ages of stupid persecutions, three wholesale confiscations and centuries of penal legislation? No student of history or patriotism can say so seriously. And no doubt some future historian, looking at the utterances of the Irish leader, and calling to mind the state of society to which they referred, will exclaim, like Hastings recollecting the heaps of gold in the Indian treasure houses, "I stand amazed at their moderation."

In fact, one is very struck that so young a politician should have been so moderate in such a crisis; but in almost every exposition of the Home Rule demand there is the same even-mindedness in pleading and the same clearness of conception in defining it. One speech in particular, delivered in Melbourne in July, 1883 (the Hon. Francis Longmore being in the chair), is worthy of special mention.

"What do I mean by Home Rule?" he said. "I mean by Home Rule the restoration to Ireland of representative government, and I define representative government to mean government in accordance with the constitutionally expressed will of the majority of the people, and carried out by a ministry constitutionally responsible to those whom they govern. In other words, I mean that the internal affairs of Ireland

shall be regulated by an Irish Parliament—that all Imperial affairs and all that relates to the Colonies, foreign states and common interests of the Empire shall continue to be regulated by the Imperial Parliament as at present constituted. The idea at the bottom of this proposal is the desirability of finding some middle course between separation on the one hand and over-centralization of government on the other. Those who propose this scheme consider it is undesirable that two countries so closely connected geographically and socially, and having so many commercial and international ties, should be wholly separated, or that any dismemberment of the Empire which Ireland had her share in building up should take place. But they are just as strongly of opinion that it is equally undesirable that one country should control the domestic affairs of another whose wants and aspirations it confessedly does not understand, whose various needs it admittedly has not time to attend to, and whose national life such a system of government tends to destroy."

Almost immediately after his return from his mission, which had brought in some £30,000 to the cause, he finished keeping his terms at the King's Inns, in Dublin. He was called to the Irish Bar in the year of the first Home Rule Bill (1886), while a year later, having completed his qualifications for the English Bar, he was called as a member of Gray's Inn.

The part he took in Gladstone's first Home Rule Bill was not such a prominent one as that which he took in the second. He attacked, as he always does, the principle rather than the details of the Bill, and showed that the very unity of England and Ireland, which had been the object of the Union, had never been attained. But for the most part he covered the same ground which he was to go over in his speeches on the second Home Rule Bill which were to make his reputation, and it is better to reserve till then any criticism of those forensic abilities which, had they been exercised in the pursuit of his profession, would long ago have placed him upon the judicial bench.

The failure of a measure of so much promise as the Home Rule Bill of 1886 was attended with the usual and inevitable result of the abandonment of a conciliatory policy, and the people, exasperated by the misgovernment of centuries and the loss of all hope of redress, broke out into open agitation. All this belongs to history, not to biography. The only point of interest is the personal one that Mr. Redmond was singled out as one whose ardour was to be tested by a term of prison life. To the Irish members of those days it was like a soldier coming under fire; none of them thought themselves worth their salt till they had been through it: and certainly Mr. Redmond looks back with the greatest sense of pride to the event.

Accordingly, in the courthouse of Ferns various vague charges of intimidation were brought against him and Mr. Edward Walsh, the proprietor of the *Wexford People*. When they arrived at Ferns they received a great ovation. A crowd with a band was in readiness to escort them, and as soon as Mr. and Mrs. Redmond appeared they were conducted up the main street in triumph. They had not gone far, however, when they were met by a body of police drawn in single file across the road. The batons were drawn and the band was ordered to cease playing. They refused, and only Mr. Redmond's timely interference put a stop to what might have ended in a nasty scuffle; but he could not suppress the enthusiasm of the crowd, who accompanied him wherever he went.

The charge brought against him was that of intimidation. It was instituted on behalf of a landlord named Captain Walker. It was undefended; but it was not necessarily, therefore, admitted. The following extract from Redmond's speech in court may serve to illustrate the spirit in which the whole affair was viewed by the prisoner.

"I intend," it ran, "to call no witnesses for the defence. The facts of the case are practically undisputed. The shorthand writer's report appears to be a fairly accurate one. I made the speech in question and I stand by every word of it, and it is for you to say

whether or not in that speech I have violated the law. I am accused here of using intimidation towards Captain Walker in my speech at Scarawalsh. I utterly repudiate and deny that accusation, and I maintain that no fair or honest interpretation of my words can support it. During the whole of my public career, extending over ten years of stormy political life, I have ever denounced violence and crime of any kind, and have sought by the action of public opinion alone to stay the hand of oppression and to protect the people in their homes. When speaking at Scarawalsh, I spoke with a grave sense of my responsibility, and I have no desire to-day to shirk or to shrink from the consequences of my words. If among these consequences should be a term of imprisonment for me, I shall bear it with a cheerful mind and the easy conscience of a man who knows that he has honestly fulfilled his duty. But if I am to be imprisoned let everyone clearly understand my offence. Let no one be deceived by the clap-trap of those who assert that my offence is an offence under the ordinary law. That is one of those half-truths which are worse than falsehoods. Intimidation is, of course, an offence under the ordinary law, but I could not be found guilty of it without the approval of a jury of my countrymen, indifferently chosen, and I venture to assert without fear of contradiction that on the evidence of my speech at Scarawalsh no jury in Ireland or in Great Britain could

be found to convict me. No, I am not being tried under the ordinary law. I am being tried under an exceptional and oppressive Act of Parliament [the Coercion Act], which outrages the fundamental principles of the constitution and robs me of my primary right as the citizen of a free country—namely, my right of trial by a jury of my countrymen, indifferently chosen. I am being tried before a tribunal of deputies of the Executive Government, who, though they combine the functions of judge and jury, are neither indifferently chosen as jurymen, nor independent of the executive as judges. Condemnation by such a tribunal will have no moral weight or authority behind it, and will be to me, not a reproach, but an honour.

"Gentlemen, I have now finished. I invite you to proceed to deliver judgment. On my part, I can only say that I am quite prepared, if need be, to go to prison proudly in a cause in which far better men than I have in the past sacrificed liberty and life. In my case, the rigours of prison life will be sweetened by the consciousness that what I am being punished for was done in the interest of my constituents and in the spirit and faithful discharge of my duty to them, and, above all, by the consciousness that I will bring with me to my prison cell the confidence of the entire people of this country almost without exception, and the good will of the friends of Ireland throughout the world."

He was sentenced to five weeks' imprisonment—without hard labour, but nevertheless as a common criminal; not with those privileges which are usually extended to political prisoners nowadays. He accepted the sentence with the greatest pride and satisfaction, shook hands with all his friends, and left the court amidst such tremendous applause that only the threat of clearing the court altogether silenced his enthusiastic admirers. It was nevertheless no trivial matter for an educated man of refined tastes and habits to be compelled to don a suit of broad-arrow pattern; to be deprived of pen, ink and paper and to be forced to sit for days and weeks on a plank bed reading the Bible! In fact, as he afterwards often jokingly referred to it, the first time he read the Bible was in the copy presented to him by the late Queen Victoria—through the prison authorities. His health began to suffer, and he lost about a stone in weight during his imprisonment. He was also put upon a diet of bread and water for a while because he refused to walk round the ring in the exercise yard in company with all the rogues, vagabonds of the town who as soon as he appeared among them greeted him with cheers of welcome like a fellow criminal in distress; and he was, therefore, removed to Tullamore.

When Mr. Redmond returned to Westminster after serving his term of imprisonment, one of the first to meet him in the lobby and welcome him back was

Mr. A. J. Balfour, who was Chief Secretary for Ireland at the time. Soon afterwards Mr. Redmond was placed in the most difficult and trying situation of his political career by the result of the O'Shea divorce suit, in which Parnell was co-respondent. It must have been a great blow to the man who had preached Parnellism and loyalty to the chief over three continents to be faced with such a scandal; but if he was one who must have felt it more keenly than anyone else, he was also one who would have preferred to cut off his right hand than turn traitor when that chief required his fidelity most.

CHAPTER III

THE PARNELL CRISIS

1890—1893

IT was, politically speaking, the second Parnell crisis that made John Redmond. True, Parnell's whole life might be called one long crisis, and the Irish Leader looked on more as an institution than a personality, but at the same time he was the Nationalist movement personified. No sooner had the Phœnix Park tragedy been dissociated from his name (after having done more to wreck his cause than all the Unionist arguments could ever have accomplished) than Home Rule once more came to the front. But the political equilibrium had hardly been thus restored when it was once more disturbed and the whole of the Irish race, at home and abroad, were swept with a storm of dissension. It has been generally supposed that this was due to the divorce suit. It was nothing of the kind: it was due entirely to the action of the Irish Party in Committee Room 15.

That the result of the divorce proceedings had affected the English mind no one for a moment can doubt, and

that the proverbially illogical electorate would in consequence withdraw its support from Home Rule, at least temporarily, was equally certain. But in spite of all this the Irish members were at first determined to stick to Parnell. On the day following the announcement of the verdict, a meeting of some forty members was held in Dublin, with John Redmond in the chair, to pass a vote of confidence in the leader; and this resolution was endorsed by a large public meeting some time later in the Leinster Hall. Ireland was shocked, but not demoralized. It was the Nonconformist agitation led by the Rev. Hugh Price-Hughes, together with Gladstone's letter practically ordering the deposition of the leader, that brought the crisis to a climax; for the Nationalist advice to Parnell seems to have been contained in the three words "Retire: Marry: Return."

Speaking some years later in America, Mr. Redmond explained the situation thus: "In November 1890, Ireland was united, her people at home and abroad were united, under the leadership of Mr. Parnell. Suddenly that union, on a particular hour of a particular day, was broken. Who broke it? It has been said that it was broken by the lamentable proceedings in the Divorce Court in England. I say that statement is notoriously untrue.

"During two whole weeks after these proceedings in

the London Divorce Court, Ireland remained true while the proceedings of that court were discussed in public and private in every Irish circle, and at the end of that fortnight's discussion I assert here, as a matter of historical fact, that the whole Irish people at home, so far as they had spoken, had declared with one voice that in their opinion the continuance of Mr. Parnell's leadership was necessary for the welfare of Ireland.

"The meetings in Ireland were attended by as many as forty clerics, conventions were unanimous, and the great Leinster Hall filled to overflowing with half the parliamentary forces. Suddenly, at the word of command from the leader of another political party, Mr. Parnell was attacked by a number of his own followers then and there, and thus was the national unity broken.

"Whoever else is responsible for breaking that unity, we, at any rate," he continued, speaking on behalf of the Parnellites, "who, when we told our leader and our friend that it was his duty to stand firm, meant what we said and afterwards stood by what we said—we, at any rate, can never in the pages of history be charged with the responsibility of having broken the national unity."

The question was therefore one of expediency, and considering the movement was the man, it was very doubtful from the first whether the cause would eventually gain by throwing him over. The years of barren sessions that followed the split of the Irish Party are the best

answers to such controversies, and the final reunion under the leader of the Parnellites is the best tribute, not to the loyalty of John Redmond, which no one ever doubted, but to his intellectual judgment of the situation.

All, however, did not take the same view, and Justin McCarthy was the foremost of those who had tried to dissuade Parnell from issuing the daring manifesto proclaiming the absolute independence of the Nationalists of all English parties. "It was a cruel stroke of fate," he wrote later in his "Story of an Irishman," "which compelled me to stand forth as the political opponent of Parnell, to whom, as a leader, I had been most sincerely devoted, and with whom I had had many years of intimate and steady friendship. I was also brought into direct hostility with men like John Redmond and many others who had been colleagues and close friends of mine for a long time, and whose motives in this crisis of political disruption I thoroughly appreciated. I quite understood why these men were upholding Parnell. They believed him to be the best leader of the Irish people, and they could not see the rightfulness of withdrawing from his leadership because he had committed an offence against the laws of private morality."

The trial of Parnell by his colleagues was worthy of Westminster Hall for dramatic importance. At all events it made a small Committee Room historical.

The scene was tragic in the extreme: the points of issue tremendous. All the past history of Ireland for the last fifty years hung in the balance, and if the hands of the clock of politics can ever be set back, they were set back on that occasion.

Morley, in his Life of Gladstone, thus describes it:

"It was the fashion for the moment in fastidious reactionary quarters, to speak of the actors in this ordeal as a hustling group of yelling rowdies. Seldom have terms so censorious been more misplaced. All depends on the point of view. Men on a raft in a boiling sea have something to think of besides deportment and the graces of serenity. As a matter of fact, even hostile judges then and since agreed that no case was ever better opened within the walls of Westminster than in the three speeches made on the first day by Mr. Sexton and Mr. Healy on the one side and Mr. Redmond on the other. In gravity, dignity, acute perception and that good faith which is the soul of real as distinct from spurious debate, the Parliamentary critic recognizes them all of the first order."

It was then for the first time that Mr. Redmond took his place among the foremost of the men in the party, and his devotion to the leader was second only to his devotion to the cause.

"I am quite certain," writes Mr. Justin McCarthy, "that Parnell himself did not, until the great crisis came

in the Irish Nationalist Party, fully appreciate the political capacity of John Redmond. Parnell always regarded him as both useful and ornamental—useful in managing the business of the party and ornamental as a brilliant speaker on a public platform. But he did not appear to know, and indeed had no means of knowing, that Redmond had in himself the qualifications of a party leader and the debating power which could make him an influence in the House of Commons. But when the great crisis came in the affairs of the party, then Redmond was soon able to prove himself made of stronger metal than even his leader had supposed. During all the debates in Committee Room 15, John Redmond took the leading part on the side of the minority. He became the foremost champion of Parnell's leadership. The position seemed to him in the nature of things. I well remember the ability and the eloquence which he displayed in these debates and the telling manner in which he put his arguments and his appeals, and the course he took was all the more to his credit, because Parnell had never singled him out as an object of special favour, and, indeed, in the opinion of many of us, had not done full justice to his services in the House of Commons."

The question of the leadership was a delicate one; but it was far less a question of ethics than of practical politics. There was a principle involved which was quite impersonal, and it was this principle for which

From a Photo by Maull & Fox.

CHARLES STEWART PARNELL.

[*To face p.* 56.

Parnell stood, and it was this principle for which Redmond stood also. It was the absence of that principle which weakened almost to death the Irish Party during the split, and it was that principle which actuated the later Parnellites and eventually brought about reunion of the Anti-Parnellites under the leader of that minority.

That principle is contained in one paragraph of the famous Parnell manifesto, and is significant as the guiding principle in Irish politics of to-day:

"Sixteen years ago," it ran, "I conceived the idea of an Irish Parliamentary party independent of all English parties. Ten years ago I was elected the leader of an independent Irish Parliamentary party. During these ten years that party has remained independent, and because of its independence it has forced upon the English people the necessity of granting Home Rule to Ireland. I believe that party will obtain Home Rule only provided it remains independent of any English party."

It was, of course, a matter of speculation how far the election of Parnell, or rather his retention, would endanger Home Rule. He did not himself anticipate it would have any ill effects on the movement; but what he felt most was the violated independence of the party in submitting to English dictation. John Redmond took up exactly the same stand, as is shown by

his speeches. He admitted that the retention of Parnell as leader might influence the vote of the British electorate, but denied that it would alter the eventual result, and, as Morley notes, that the split which would ensue would be far more serious in its effects on public opinion both in England and Ireland. Even going further and admitting Parnell's guilt, it was a question whether the prospects offered were worth the sacrifice. And if it be admitted that the sacrifice was obligatory upon the Irish party, it must likewise have been obligatory upon our ancestors in the case of some of the heroes of the past. Yet who would have thought of deposing Napoleon on the eve of Waterloo, or Nelson on the very day of Trafalgar?

John Redmond's speech in Committee Room 15 struck the keynote of the situation. It was calm, short, and to the point, as the following extract will show:

"When it becomes a question of selling our leader, to buy an alliance," he began, "it would be well to see what we were getting for the price. First, it seems to me, that in selling our leader in order to preserve the Liberal alliance, we are selling absolutely and irrevocably the independence of the Irish party. This party has been powerful only because it has been independent; every Irish party that ever existed in this House fell in the same way—if we sacrifice Parnell to preserve this

alliance the days in our generation of the independence of the Irish party are at an end. Mr. Gladstone would be absolutely unfettered, and he would have the Irish party, so to speak, in the hollow of his hand, and it would be a discredited and powerless tool of the Liberal party. As to your retention being a danger to the Irish cause, and the Home Rule cause, I do not believe that it is a real danger, and these are reasons why I do not believe my friend Mr. Sexton's argument is a sound one when he says, that this matter is urgent because this alliance would be broken up if you were maintained. I will say nothing about my motive in this matter. I disdain to do so. My public record, without any boasting, I should say entitles me to entertain the belief that whatever course I take the more people will believe that I am actuated by the highest motives of patriotism.

"It is true I have a feeling of personal loyalty to you," he went on, turning to Parnell. "I have said elsewhere, and I say here, that you have been my friend, and I think it is no time in which a man who has been once your friend should turn against you. But I most solemnly say that while you remain my friend, and my personal attachment is the same to you as it always was, I declare most solemnly that in this consideration I am not allowing my personal attachment to you to weigh in the balance. I would sacrifice my liberty I

would sacrifice my life, I would sacrifice the liberty and life of the truest and best friend I have in the world, for the sake of the independence of my country. It is not a personal motive that animates me; it is because I believe that your maintenance is necessary to the success of our cause."

Mr. Gladstone's action was, therefore, the immediate origin of the crisis. But what made the situation still more acute for the Nationalists, was the fact that no one knew what Gladstone's real intentions were, so that they might be going to sell their leader, as many like Redmond thought, for what might eventually prove a sham Home Rule Bill which would be nothing more than an insult to Nationalist aspirations.

On December 3rd they tried to obtain an assurance of the intentions of the Liberal party on the subject of Home Rule, which if satisfactory might have induced Parnell to retire, and at a meeting afterwards Healy and Sexton expressed promises of conditional future loyalty. But as Barry O'Brien observes: "The Liberals simply regarded the Anti-Parnellites as a lot of simpletons to allow themselves to be out-manœuvred by this clever device, and as the Anti-Parnellites sank lower and lower in the Liberal opinion after this incident of the struggle, the genius of the chief shone brighter than ever, even in the eyes of his foes."

It was agreed, therefore, that a deputation of the

Irish party, consisting of Mr. Leamy, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Healy and Mr. Redmond, should seek an interview with Mr. Gladstone to ask his intentions, and report the result to their colleagues in Room 15.

"I was one of those who went on that deputation to Mr. Gladstone," said Mr. Redmond years later. "I sat for a considerable time in his study. Mr. Sexton and myself both put before Mr. Gladstone the situation as to Ireland with all the force and earnestness at our disposal. We told him that if Mr. Parnell's recollection of the Hawarden interview was wrong, as he, Mr. Gladstone, said, then he, Mr. Gladstone, was bound for the sake of Ireland to clear up the difference of recollection by stating what really occurred. We pointed out to him that our country at that moment was standing on the brink of an abyss, and that unless some way out of the difficulty was found, we had before us in Ireland a future of disunion, of internal discord, and that the Liberal party had before them in England a future of danger and difficulty, and we exhausted all the words of persuasion, and, I might say for myself, of absolute entreaty, in our endeavour to get him to say one word, he knowing full well that if that word were satisfactory the Irish crisis would have ended. But all our efforts failed. Mr. Gladstone, for what reason I know not, unless it be that Mr. Parnell's story of the Hawarden interview was true, remained absolutely silent."

All they could get out of Gladstone was simply: "The question you have to decide is the leadership of the Irish party. I am not going to have that question mixed up with Home Rule; one question at a time. I hold the views on Home Rule which I always held, and when the time comes for introducing a new Home Rule Bill you shall know all about it. Meanwhile rest assured that I shall introduce no Home Rule Bill which has not the unanimous approval of the Irish party."

"It was an interesting game of tactics between the 'Grand Old Man,'" as Barry O'Brien goes on to observe, "and the grand young men, but the former won." The report of the delegates was, in effect, that Mr. Gladstone would not enter into negotiations with the party while Parnell still remained leader. A stormy debate followed, in Room 15, and at last Mr. McCarthy rose, saying it was idle to continue proceedings longer.

Forty-four followed him out of the room, twenty-six remained. Gladstone had split the party.

Parnell felt the desertion keenly. "Why did you encourage me to come forward and maintain my leadership in the face of the world if you were not prepared to stand by me?" he asked. At the same time he felt the loyalty of his faithful followers with all the gratitude which a man in sorrow feels for real devotion.

And to none was he more grateful than to John Redmond, who was constantly at his side in the struggle that ensued, and upon whose shoulders his mantle of leadership was destined to fall after his death.

The Boulogne negotiations were the last attempt to reunite the forces amicably. They lasted for about a month. The name "Seceders," which Mr. Parnell had fastened upon the majority, was not unmerited. Their representatives admitted as much in the terms of capitulation which they offered. These were nothing short of absolute submission. Mr. Justin McCarthy's election as their leader was to be first of all declared invalid, and then both Gladstone and the Irish Roman Catholic bishops were to be prevailed upon to withdraw their public condemnation of Parnell, while Parnell himself was to be retained in the presidency of the National League.

William O'Brien had just returned from America, hence Parnell was anxious to have an opportunity of seeing him. An arrangement was come to, and Parnell accompanied by the two Redmonds, J. J. Clanchy, Henry Campbell and Vincent Scully, crossed over to meet him at Boulogne.

There were many accounts published in the press, Mr. Redmond's, quoted by Mr. Barry O'Brien, being as follows:

"When we arrived we went to an hotel. O'Brien rushed

up gushingly to meet Parnell, who was extremely reserved and cold. He saluted O'Brien just as if he had seen him yesterday and as if there were nothing special going forward. O'Brien plunged into business at once.

"'Oh, no, William,' said Parnell, 'I must have something to eat first.' Then he ordered luncheon and we all sat down and ate. When luncheon was over Parnell said: 'Now, William, we will talk.' We then adjourned to another room. Parnell still remained silent, reserved, cold, and did not in any way encourage O'Brien to talk. He looked around at the rest of us as much as to say, 'Well, what the devil do you want?' The rest of us soon withdrew, leaving Parnell and O'Brien together. After some time O'Brien rejoined us. He looked utterly flabbergasted, said it was all over, and that Parnell had no intention of doing anything. I asked him if he had made any proposals to Parnell, or if he had any proposals to make. He said that he had proposals, but did not submit them to Parnell, as Parnell seemed so unwilling to talk. He then stated the proposals to me, which were substantially, so far as I can now remember, these:—

"1. The retraction of the bishops' manifesto.

"2. Some acknowledgment from Mr. Gladstone that the publication of his letter was precipitate and inadvisable.

"3. A meeting of the whole party in Dublin, with Parnell in the chair, and acknowledgment of the informality of Mr. McCarthy's election as chairman.

"4. Voluntary resignation of Parnell, who should, however, remain President of the National League.

"5. Election of a temporary chairman.

"6. Appointment of Dillon as chairman.

"I went immediately to Parnell and told him of these proposals. 'Ah, now we have something specific to go upon. Let O'Brien come back.'

"O'Brien came back and these points were discussed. Parnell said at once that he would not accept the chairmanship of Dillon, but he would with pleasure accept the chairmanship of O'Brien. O'Brien and I then went out and wired to Dillon, saying that Parnell had proposed that O'Brien should be leader of the party. Dillon wired back warning O'Brien to beware of Parnell, and not to trust him. Such, at least, is my recollection of the substance of the telegram. Next day Parnell returned to London, and I went to Paris with O'Brien, where I remained for some eight or ten days. Nothing so far was settled."

Another interview with Parnell took place, which Mr. Redmond thus described: "I saw him alone first, and we had a short private talk about O'Brien's new

plan. He said nothing, but looked at me with an amused, and an amusing smile. I could not help feeling what a pair of children O'Brien and I were in the hands of this man. The meaning of the smile was as plain as words. It meant: 'Well, really, you are excellent fellows, right good fellows, but 'pon my soul, a d——d pair of fools; sending William O'Brien to Hawarden to negotiate with Mr. Gladstone! Delightful.' Well, he simply smiled William O'Brien's plan out of existence, and stuck to his original proposal. Next day he went back to London and I went with him."

From that moment the whole affair of the leadership and the policy of the party became the centre of a political free fight in Ireland. The champion of Irish rights, Mr. Gladstone became "the grand old spider"; the Anti-Parnellites—"the miserable gutter-sparrows, and kept slaves of an English political party," and every tavern, drawing-room and presbytery in Ireland emulated the scenes that had taken place in Committee Room 15.

After the failure of the Boulogne negotiations, Parnell determined to fight, and John Redmond determined to throw in his lot with his leader. "It was observable, however, that among Mr. Parnell's assailants," writes *The Annual Register* for 1901, "the most venomous was Mr. T. Healy, whose attacks were rather personal than political, and who violated all the canons of good taste

by indecorous and ill-natured allusions to Mrs. O'Shea. Another phrase which has never died was Mr. Healy's declaration that he would "drive Parnell into the grave or a lunatic asylum," while at a meeting of the National Federation (May 20th) he said that "if anyone attempted to patch up the present differences by a compromise on the basis of the continued leadership he would be simply hunted out of the country with a kettle tied to his tail."

Parnell himself made an able defence. He fully granted the moral right of the bishops to interfere in cases where the question of morality arose, but he maintained that both by acts of commission and omission they had publicly forfeited that right in the sense that they had declared it purely a political issue. A few days after the verdict of the Divorce Court, the Bishop of Meath told Mr. Healy that Parnell's political leadership should be retained, and the Archbishop of Dublin wrote, before he had seen Gladstone's letter, saying he urged Parnell's retirement not on grounds of morality, but for purely political reasons. And considering that the origin of the quarrel was due to Church interference, there is some irony in one of Archbishop Walsh's letters to the National Press, in which he says: "I am deeply convinced that the continuance of this ruinous conflict, even for a little longer, must be absolutely destructive of every hope of the

establishment of Home Rule in Ireland, at all events in the present century. To me it is one of the most obvious truths of the present deplorable situation that the fitness of our people for Home Rule, and indeed for Constitutional Government of any kind, is questionable, and that so far the evidence of that fitness is somewhat less clear than it ought to be."

It was all the more ironical considering that when Mr. Parnell made what in Protestant England was understood as moral amends by marrying Mrs. O'Shea, a general meeting of the bishops at Maynooth still continued the embroglio between morality and politics by recording "the solemn expression of our judgment as pastors of the Irish people, that Mr. Parnell by his public misconduct has utterly disqualified himself to be the political leader . . . . has supplied new and convincing proof that he is wholly unworthy of the confidence of Catholics, and we therefore feel bound on this occasion to call upon our people to repudiate his leadership . . . "

In the end all principles were thrown to the winds and the contest became one purely between the Church and Parnell. The *Freeman's Journal*, the leading Nationalist daily newspaper in Ireland, for a long time supported the laymen and came into collision with the Archbishop of Dublin, who branded it as being not unworthy of the traditions of the Atheistic Freemasonry

of the Continent. "The men who dwell with prurient persistency on the Divorce Court," it retorted, "are the very men who scoffed at it or passed it over in the beginning. These men out of their own mouths are bound to regard the issue in question as a purely political issue." But however just this attitude was in theory, in practice it threatened to become ruinous to the newspaper. An excuse for a change of tone was found in the marriage of Mr. Parnell and Mrs. O'Shea; but it was generally understood that the real cause of the *volte-face* was that the commercial got the better of the editorial department, for a financial panic set in among the shareholders of the *Freeman's Journal*, and with one bound that vigorous organ landed in the camp of the seceders.

One of the last significant acts of Parnell was his going down to Kilkenny, where all the priests were ranged against him, with the intention of expressing a desire once and for all to put an end to the interference of the priest in politics.

Mr. Barry O'Brien, who tells the incident, protested against this course.

"You are drawing your sword on the whole Order," he said, "instead of objecting to the action of the individual priest; O'Connell could afford to do this, you can't. If the priests have to be fought, they must be fought by Catholics, not by Protestants."

"Ah, now," replied Parnell, "you have said something which is quite true. A Protestant leader must not do this. But the system must be stopped, and you Catholics must stop it. The priests themselves must be got to see it is wrong."

The words well fitted the occasion; and they became the watchword of his party. But how far the struggle would have ended eventually in the victory of the layman when once his potent personality had survived the first shock of opposition, no one now can tell. Nor can any one say whether a defeat would have meant merely a postponement of the struggle and the awaiting of another leader. Perhaps that strong Nationalism, blended with a supreme respect for religion, which was later to characterize the leadership of Mr. John Redmond, may, after all, prove the best solution to such a difficulty.

Suddenly, like a bolt from the blue, or rather like that cry of despair which arose at Hastings when Harold was found pierced with an arrow, came the terrible news of Parnell's death at Brighton. At once John Redmond hurried to the spot, and though he arrived before the remains were coffined, he was not one of those very few who actually saw the dead leader. He took charge on behalf of the family and the party of all the preparations for a public funeral, and brought the body to Dublin, where it was solemnly interred in

Glasnevin Cemetery, close to the grave of O'Connell. A concourse of people from all parts of Ireland such as had never been seen in Dublin since the funeral of the great liberator formed a procession which followed the coffin of Parnell to the cemetery. All the European Press, from Moscow to Rome, was stirred. In New York all the flags were flown at half-mast. The feeling in Dublin was that he had been "done to death" by the Anti-Parnellites, not a single official member of whom ventured to be present at Glasnevin Cemetery; while the former utterances of the Archbishop of Dublin, wired to New York, only fanned the flame of hatred. "Archbishop Walsh's utterances," said one public speaker there, "are unpatriotic, unchristianlike and shocking. There can never be union between the two factions until the priests in Ireland are driven from the platform back to their pulpits."

But the matter of supreme importance was the position to be taken up by those who, like John Redmond, had made the retention of Parnell not so much a personal question as the protestation of political principles. Had the whole quarrel been one of loyalty to a chief, he could have at once joined the followers of Mr. Justin McCarthy. Had it been a question of pure vindictiveness he might have refused to join hands with "the murderers"—to use the phrase which used to be hurled at John Dillon in the Dublin streets. He

preferred to adhere to the policy which he believed was at issue, and in this he has carried out to the letter what I may call Parnell's political will. It is to be found in the manifesto issued shortly after the funeral by the followers of the chief.

"On the threshold of the tomb, the leader whom we mourn, defined our duty in these memorable words: 'If I were dead and gone to-morrow, the men who are fighting English influence in Irish public life would fight on still. They would still be independent Nationalists, they would still believe in the future of Ireland as a nation: and they would still protest that it was not by taking orders from an English member that Ireland's future could be saved, protected or secured.' Fellow-countrymen, let it be the glory of our race at home and abroad to act up to the spirit of this message. God save Ireland."

CHAPTER IV

THE HOME RULE BILL

1893

"MY heart bleeds for the poor fellows," said Gladstone once after receiving one of the deputations from the perplexed Nationalist party during the proceedings in Room 15. If Gladstone's heart bled during Parnell's life, it must have done so ten times more after his death, which added the bitterness of a great tragedy to the political quarrel. At first there were many who, like Justin McCarthy, thought that the difference having been a personal one, it would die with the person. But it was not a personal matter, it was a principle personified, as soon became evident both from the tone and the action of the Independents, as the little band of Parnellites were now called.

Their leadership fell almost naturally to the one man who had so championed Parnell's cause, and who, by acting as chief mourner, and undertaking all the public arrangements for the funeral of the dead chief, had already been singled out for that position by public opinion. Mr. Redmond was officially elected, however,

a few days later, and from that day till the eventful reunion of the two sections of the Nationalist party ten years later, led what then was thought the losing cause. The most uncompromising hostility at once declared itself between the two sections. The death of Parnell had been too tragic for his followers to step over his grave and shake hands with his "murderers"—as the followers of John Dillon were still called. It was wild rant, perhaps, that dictated the fierce epithets hurled broadcast at everyone, as T. D. Sullivan observes, but it indicated the Parnellite temper, announced the Parnellite decision. In that decision there were hardly two more prominent men than the two brothers Redmond; and Mr. William Redmond's article in *United Ireland* struck the keynote of the extreme Parnellite sentiment.

"Hearts are beating," he wrote, "and eyes are glistening with a secret gladness in every part of the world to-day where the blood-red flag of England floats. The greatest friend of Irish liberty, the greatest enemy of British tyranny, the one man hated and feared before all other men by the oppressors of Ireland, is killed by the foulest slander, hunted to death, that the virtue of Ireland might be vindicated to the satisfaction of the Pharisees and hypocrites of holy England. The Nonconformist conscience is now at ease; the scandalmongers and canters of Great Britain are satisfied. The English

eader who struck the first blow may now be content —his great rival is now no more. The Christians who, contrary to the Divine teaching of their Master, mercilessly persecuted the chief may now rest from their labours: the chief is dead—all is, no doubt, well. The virtue of Ireland having been vindicated, the orders of our English masters having been carried out, the noblest, bravest and truest of Irishmen having been driven broken-hearted to the grave, Ireland will now receive at the gracious hands of England some measure of freedom.

"Perhaps, indeed, we may be ordered to forget the very name of him to whose matchless labours any liberty we receive will be due. They ordered us to drive him forth; they may order us to forget him now that he is dead. Liberty is now, we are assured, at hand. Yes, but by the memory of the dead we never, never, never will forget the price our masters exacted for it. Millions alive to-day, and millions and millions yet unborn, will remember that before England removed one finger of her blood-stained hand from Ireland's throat she ordered us to break the heart of our best and truest chief. Charles Stewart Parnell is dead. But his spirit marches on, and to-day over his freshly turned grave we renew our allegiance to the cause of Irish National Independence. Another item has been added to the account which Ireland has to settle. Some day—it may be soon,

it may be late; it may be in our time, or it may be when we, too, are in our graves—but some day, as surely as the sun sets over our heart-broken land to-night, that account will be settled and Ireland will pay the debt so long due."

John Redmond—"that cold-blooded young gentleman," as Mr. William O'Brien once called him—was perhaps less emotional, though not less sincere than his brother, for he thought throughout of "Parnellism" as a principle of action rather than as devotion to a personality. Speaking in Clare a short while later, where he had been introduced as Parnell's successor, he emphatically told his audience that they were wrong in speaking of him in any sense as "the leader of the Parnellites." There had never been and never would be, as far as his voice went, any attempt to fill the place rendered vacant by Parnell's death. He believed the man had yet to be born who would be capable of wearing the mantle of the late chief. Parnell was still their leader and they were determined to fight for his principles; but they were fighting singly, and as soldiers in the ranks.

Redmond's first action was to put up for Parnell's old constituency, rebel Cork, upon which the whole of political interest was for the time centred, and the greatest excitement prevailed. But the result proved somewhat disheartening. Alderman Flavin, the nominee

of the Anti-Parnellites, was returned with a majority of over 1,500 votes. The cry of "clerical interference" was raised and not without some ground, as, according to Mr. Davitt, one influential priest spiritually terrorized the political consciences of the citizens of Cork, and had even gone so far as to declare that promises made to John Redmond were not morally binding. But it was generally thought that the fact that Redmond in a sense represented the spirit of faction had also something to do with his defeat.

The retirement from parliamentary life was, however, only temporary. He put up for Waterford City a few weeks later, Michael Davitt opposing him. Both parties were heated, and in a *mêlée* Davitt was cut across the temple by one of the "Redmondites" while he was walking in the street. John Redmond, of course, made the *amende honorable* and denounced the action of his followers, but it raised no little ill-feeling. Davitt declared after the contest, in which he was beaten by 500 votes, that he owed his defeat to Terrorism and Toryism, for all the Tories, it appears, had voted for his opponent.

The Waterford election was looked upon rather as a triumph for the Parnellites, who felt that, though weak before Parnell's death, their party would have to face fearful odds afterwards. For they knew, as John Redmond had himself said, that it was to a certain extent

a forlorn hope they were leading, and they were quite conscious that their action would mean calumny in public life, ostracism from social life, political defeat at the polls, perhaps complete extinction. But for this very reason, he maintained, men who took up a cause with odds like these against them, showed they were men who believed in their cause and were in earnest; and as men who believed in those principles and who were sincere in the cause they had taken up, he declared no number of defeats would drive them a single inch from the position which they believed was the position of honour, of dignity and of safety to the national cause.

What that position was Redmond explained a few days later when, at a meeting of the National League in Dublin, he declared the policy of the Parnellites more in detail. He stood out, he said, for absolute independence and denounced what he called the anti-Parnellite spirit of "devolution"—though he did not use the word. Mr. Gladstone would in all probability endeavour to conciliate British opposition by concessions to it in order to get the Bill passed. Mr. Davitt had declared he would accept anything, however small. John Redmond thought the right policy was to strengthen Gladstone's resolution and not to allow him to whittle away his Bill till it pleased the Lords. He believed the English public looked upon Home Rule as

an expedient, but that expedient should be a full not a half measure. There was no question of separation, but only of a parliament of their own, supreme in Irish affairs and subject only to the veto of the Crown. The position was logical, for an unconditional promise to accept anything from Gladstone would not only throw away a golden opportunity, but might lead to the establishment of a system which would prove a disaster to the cause instead of its salvation.

Upon his return to Parliament the new leader at once declared his policy, repeating Parnell's latest declarations on the "minimum" and calling on the Gladstonians to define their proposals. The speech was spirited, and, in fact, one of the finest in the debate; but it produced no little friction between him and those who followed the new anti-Parnellite principle of accepting anything a Liberal alliance might bring. His motion was only defeated by 179 votes to 158.

On the eve of the General Election in June, 1892, the new Parnellite leader went over to New York to give an account of the cause the Irish-Americans had so much at heart and to plead for financial support. It was a delicate mission and not without a certain touch of pathos that the young leader should present himself as "all that was left of them"—of that gallant brigade whom the Irish in the United States had encouraged with their enthusiasm and their wealth in

order to help the chief to fight the battle of Ireland. Accordingly, in a large assembly gathered together in the New York Academy of Music, with Judge Lynn in the chair, Redmond told them the story of the great disaster. He was the right man in the right place: for the Irish-Americans were for the most part Parnellites to a man and they welcomed the champion of the great leader's cause. Mr. Thomas A. Emmet, President of the Irish Confederation, for example, had only voiced the sentiments of most Irish-Americans when, shortly after the chief's death, he had said, "It would be absurd to expect that the mere fact of the death of Mr. Parnell will bring the two factions together; the Parnellites are more bitter than ever against the men who, had they been content to leave him and his work in peace, instead of worrying him into his grave, might, they think, still have had the benefit of his leadership. I do not know what will be the outcome of all this; but the Parnellites, at least in America, will never accept the McCarthyites as leaders. Now less than ever."

In his speech Mr. Redmond referred to two points—the first was an apology for the "Parnellite tactics," the second an apology for the "Parnellite demand."

In the first portion he was careful to show clearly, as we have already seen, that the unity of the party had been broken up, not by the O'Shea divorce proceedings, but by the members of the party, and those members

had not been himself and his colleagues, who, when they told Parnell, their leader and their friend, that it was their duty to stand firm, meant what they said and afterwards stood by what they said. He then proceeded to show how he had tried himself to reunite the party upon the broad platform of amnesty and had been met by the answer which he read to the meeting from Mr. Dillon. "Though I am strongly in favour of amnesty, I cannot be present at your meetings, because I cannot consent to stand upon the same parliamentary platform with the parliamentary supporters of Mr. John Redmond, who, in my deliberate judgment, are the most dangerous enemies of the Irish cause."

Mr. T. P. O'Connor had suggested another policy of conciliation, which was to distribute the Nationalist seats at the General Election according to the proportion of gains previously made by the rival parties. This would have enabled the Parnellites to avoid any unseemly faction fights in the constituencies, return to Parliament in a friendly spirit, and accept or reject any proposal of the Liberals. It had been practically accepted by the Anti-Parnellite party, seven out of nine of the Committee having given their assent. But it was abandoned, as Mr. O'Brien observed, entirely owing to the opposition of Mr. Healy, and a rather dramatic touch was given to the meeting addressed by Mr. Redmond in New York, by the arrival of a cable from

Dublin which confirmed the leader's words. It ran: "Dublin, June 15th. Every proposal of ours for peace has been rejected, and the Whigs are now determined to expel from public life every man who stood by Parnell."

How far persons are responsible for practical deadlocks in political principles: how far Mr. Healy may have been justified in allowing the country to decide: how far the arrangement proposed by Mr. T. P. O'Connor would have avoided one of the most squalid faction fights between priests and people, which took place at the General Election, is difficult to say; but the facts of the situation remained, and from an argumentative point of view the Parnellite position was tolerably well established. It was rather for the man who had deserted Parnell to explain his position or else explain the words which had done more than anything to strengthen the chief's resolve to fight for his leadership. "If the Irish people for whom he has done so much, for whom he has braved so much, suffered so much," said Mr. Healy before the appearance of the Gladstone letter, "if they were so frivolous and lighthearted as to permit themselves at the first sound of this wretched and unfortunate case to be dragged away from the support they have hitherto accorded Mr. Parnell, all I can say is that this Irish nation would be my nation no more."

The second portion of Mr. Redmond's speech at New York dealt with the Parnellite demand and is very significant, in that it contains the key to that difference of opinion which was later to distinguish the two Nationalist parties in the House of Commons. "I believe if we accepted a parliament which was bound hand and foot by restrictions, a parliament which would not have the power of ruling our country in purely Irish affairs, free from this meddlesome and ignorant interference of English politicians, that parliament would be a failure. I believe it would be taken from us again, and therefore I say I believe it would be the height of unwisdom for Ireland to accept as a full settlement of her claims anything less than a full, honest and free parliament—though, of course, subject to a constitutional veto."

Then by way of a final declaration of the future tactics of the Parnellite party, he said, "I have been for eleven years in the English Parliament; when I went in there I joined a party of about a score of men. We had the open hostility of every English party—Whigs, Tories, Radicals, Conservatives, who, differing on every point of policy, were always ready to unite against us; but if they were ready to unite against us, we put our backs to the wall, and we fought each of them in turn, and in the end we drove from power by our votes, first the Tory party, then the Liberal party—we did it by

independence. Our power was not in our numbers—twenty against six hundred. It lay in our absolute disregard of any interests save the interests of Ireland; it lay in the fact that the English parties never knew upon what side we would vote. We were independents, and our votes always hung in the balance; and I say that our power as twenty men was greater far than would be the power of eighty-six united Nationalists who were prepared on the purely Irish question of the Irish leadership to obey the orders of an English statesman."

But far more important than either domestic squabbles or the American mission was the plea which Mr. Redmond continually put forward, both during Parnell's life and since his death, for an explicit pronouncement from Gladstone. An opportunity offered itself in an article he wrote in the October number of the *Nineteenth Century*. In it he explained how he had been attacked both by his former colleagues and by the Liberals as merely trying to embarrass Gladstone. It was as if a common soldier wished to see a general's plans, said Davitt. He admitted that the Liberals had a perfect right to withhold the information, but he maintained that if they did this it would in no way advance the Home Rule question. It had been withheld before the elections, it was withheld still. They were to be offered a cut-and-dried

scheme to be accepted or rejected, and in such a way the Irish question could never be settled. "For my part," he continued, "I am of opinion that the first essential to Mr. Gladstone's success in drafting a satisfactory scheme of government for Ireland is for him to know the views upon every vital point of all classes and sections of Irishmen, and that no Home Rule scheme can ever have any chance of acceptance by the British people unless it satisfies the demand of Ireland and thereby affords a final settlement of the international question at issue."

The point was the very centre of the Parnellite position. Had Gladstone given the deputations from Room 15 a satisfactory assurance on this point Parnell would probably have retired, at least for a time, from public life. Both from an English and an Irish standpoint John Redmond's plea was therefore perfectly logical. It was hardly fair to expect the Irish party to accept blindfold a nonworkable scheme; it was likewise manifestly unjust to expect the English party to rush through a Home Rule Bill. Hence in either case it was unwise to withhold the scheme from Imperial discussion. A more undemocratic position could not be conceived. "We do not ask for a repeal of the Union," Mr. Redmond said; "we ask for a readjustment. In any case, a thorough discussion, not merely in Parliament but in the country, of all the vital points

which affect an Irish Home Rule constitution is essential to a final settlement of this great international question. Ireland has nothing to fear from a full and free discussion of her claims. Mr. Gladstone has, I believe, nothing to fear from criticism of his scheme if it has the one merit of being thorough in character. The sooner, therefore, the discussion commences, the better; and it is with the object of stimulating a desire to come at once to close quarters with this question that I have penned these pages."

In this view he was not alone, for Lord Salisbury had put the situation in a nutshell when he said, "Ireland has been invited to meet her future fate much on the terms on which a Turkish bridegroom is invited to meet his bride: namely, that he shall not know her features till the day the ceremony is to be performed" —while Lord Londonderry, Viceroy of Ireland in the first Unionist Administration, was rather inclined to think Gladstone's reticence was because he intended to take up a milk-and-water policy, in order not to alarm English sympathizers, and be more sure of their support of the new principle. This was what John Redmond feared, and what made him adhere to the Parnellite policy.

The able article on the "Readjustment of the Union" was only the prelude to an able speech in the House of Commons. From that moment the tone of the Press

changed towards the young member: he had made his name. "The personal followers of Parnell," as Mr. Herbert Paul notes in his "Political History of England," "were almost wiped out by the elections—only nine came back to Westminster, but among them was their leader, one of the most powerful debaters in the House of Commons."

"Redmond's speech was a revelation," wrote Sir Henry Lucy, speaking of the two reputations which had been established during one of the first nights of the Session, "while Mr. Asquith's was a confirmation and final establishment of a position the brilliant capture of which has no parallel in modern parliamentary history. It is only this Session Mr. John Redmond has made his mark in the House," he continues. "It was scored when he delivered a brief speech on the Address, the House marvelling to find what long steps he had taken since—in Mr. Parnell's time—he occasionally filled his appointed part in the task of prolonged debates. To-day he strode into the front rank of parliamentary debaters. His manner of delivery is excellent. He has a melodious voice, perfectly under control. His diction is pure, free from the gaudy colours which come natural to some of his countrymen, and yet, as was shown towards the end of his speech, capable of sustained flights of lofty eloquence. These are matters of manner, and it is truer

in the House of Commons than anywhere that manner makes a man. Mr. Redmond's oratorical style, as the House discovered, is based upon a substratum of solid knowledge, sound common sense and a statesmanlike capacity to review a complicated situation. Circumstances happening within the past three months have forced upon the leader of the small Parnellite party the necessity of tacking; those chiefly found amongst his own countrymen, most fully acquainted with the exigencies of the hour, were most fervid in their admiration of the skill with which to-night the manœuvre was carried out."

When Gladstone's Home Rule Bill of 1893 was eventually brought in, it was found that what the Parnellite leader most objected to in the Bill was exactly what he had most dreaded—its want of finality. What its opponents most objected to was also the want of finality. But both meant different things by that "want of finality." Mr. Chamberlain, who from the first fastened upon the phrase, meant one thing: John Redmond meant another; and the debates became at times a personal duel between them. It was upon the rock of that misunderstanding Home Rule split.

The Redmondite position was, in constitutional language, well defended. It was fought by Mr. Chamberlain entirely as a scare. Its workable merits and its essential principle were ignored: its "possible

possibilities" alone were dwelt on. It was an interesting essay on government, this fight of the two great Imperialists. It was such a one as the elder Pitt and the Tories must have had, or such as Fox and the younger Pitt, as they debated a century before the great questions of Imperial unity for Ireland and America.

The turning-point was Mr. Chamberlain's "imperial scare" as Mr. Redmond pointed out, that they were accepting the measure in bad faith and with an ultimate view to separation. "I challenge anyone in this House," Mr. Redmond exclaimed, "to quote a statement of mine or any of those associated with me that so long as we remain partners in the Empire at all, and so long as the Act of Union remains unrepealed, the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament is to be or can be abrogated. We have maintained that the concession of free institutions in Ireland means that you have put trust in the Irish people, and that the interference of this Parliament in the working of these institutions would be absolutely inconsistent. Representative institutions exist in other parts of the Empire. How many of them would exist in six months if this House took it into its head to exercise its right as a supreme legislature? . . . The concession of representative institutions to Ireland means that you have made up your minds to let us manage our own affairs free from the interference of the Imperial Parliament. It is true the right

honourable gentleman anticipates that the necessity for interference by this Parliament will cease. That may be—I think it will, for I am one of those who agree with Mr. Parnell's opinion that the Irish people under Home Rule will be shrewd enough to know that any violation of the Constitution, or oppression by that Parliament, will be so many nails driven into the coffin of the Constitution, and I do not therefore think that the occasion for interference will arise. If it does arise, nothing we can say, nothing we can do, nothing that you can put into an Act of Parliament now, so long as the Union remains unrepealed, can deprive you of the right to control the Irish Parliament as you can control the Australian and Canadian Parliaments, and to check the growth of oppression and injustice."

The second argument by which Home Rule was fought—the clerical scare—was likewise well met, and bears quoting as a statement of fact, rather than as any personal animosity aroused by the Parnellite conflict.

"You will understand me when I say that I am likely to give impartial testimony on that matter," he said, referring to the charge of undue priestly influence. "It is true that in the political life of Ireland the Catholic priesthood wield an enormously preponderating power, but they wield it largely because of the character of the struggle the people are waging. Still, I am

convinced as I am of my own existence that the political power—the political supremacy, if you like—of the Catholic clergy will not, if it is tried, be used successfully under a free parliament of the Irish people. Surely the events of the past couple of years in Ireland, instead of giving alarm to the Protestants, should give them some encouragement.

"The honourable member for Londonderry said in his speech the other night that I ought to be the last man in the House to say a word upon this subject. I say there is no man in this House who has a better right to speak on it. I and my comrades sit in this House as the result of defeating the unanimous opposition of the priests of Ireland. There is not one of us who was not opposed, as I was, determinedly, consistently and unanimously by the entire priesthood of Ireland. Only a few of us have been returned, but I ask, when in the past history of Ireland—even when the right honourable gentleman, the member for West Birmingham, was thinking of giving over education without restriction to the people of Ireland—when, I ask, was such a spectacle afforded as seventy thousand Catholic votes being recorded against practically the open opposition of the whole body of the priesthood of Ireland? I say that it is in that spirit of independence to clerical interference in political matters the Protestants will find in the future their best guarantee and safeguard."

He argued that from an internal economic standpoint domestic autonomy should be granted: he showed that according to all ethical standards the nation had a moral right to it; but he laid chief stress upon Home Rule, not only as a national necessity, but as the very strongest bond of Imperial democratic unity.

Once more Mr. Chamberlain became the special target.

"The right honourable member for West Birmingham has another argument, that the Bill will lead to separation. He said that the Bill would change Ireland into a foreign and hostile country. . . . . It would be well for them to consider, however, whether they could make Ireland more foreign and hostile than it admittedly is at present. But in almost the same breath in which he spoke of this Bill making Ireland a 'foreign' country, he said it would put her in the position of Canada. Is Canada then a foreign country? The idea is almost preposterous. But why should not Ireland be put in the same position as Canada? 'Because,' replies the right honourable gentleman, 'Canada is friendly to the Empire and Ireland is not.'" His answer to this was simply history—and certainly the objection could not be better fought.

"In 1839 Canada was with difficulty held by force of arms for the British crown. Canada was in open rebellion. Canada was at a distance from England—close to a great republic which was certainly not unwilling to

incorporate the Canadian provinces with its States. The experiment was tried of giving Canada Home Rule. It has not disintegrated the Empire."

He then continued:

"The right honourable gentleman says Canada is only held by a 'voluntary tie' (though the most loyal in its allegiance to the British Crown). But does the right honourable gentleman, who is regarded as a leader of democratic thought in this country, mean to say he prefers a union based upon force, as the present union with Ireland, to a union which rests upon the will of the people? Edmund Burke said—'A voluntary tie is a more secure link of connection than subordination borne with grudging and discontent.' So say we, and so also, we believe, will say the democracy of England, even though some of its so-called leaders refuse to trust the people of Ireland."

Two points on the question of the Irish representation at Westminster are worthy of note—the one that would make Ireland a mere colony, and the one that would give Home Rule to Ireland alone.

"As a Nationalist, I may say I do not regard as entirely palatable the idea that for ever and a day Ireland's voice should be excluded from the councils of an Empire which the genius and valour of her sons have done so much to build up, and of which she is to remain a part." In support of the federal idea he

added: "I look forward to the day when the federal idea may be applied to England, Scotland and Wales, as well as Ireland. Then the character of the so-called Imperial Parliament would be changed. It would be then only an Imperial parliament and all the kingdoms having their own national parliaments might be represented in it. But if Ireland alone has a parliament of her own . . . you must allow Irishmen who had sole control of Irish affairs to interfere in, and probably decide, English and Scotch affairs—an obvious injustice."

The words are not insignificant in the present crisis. Probably the young member never fancied that he was to become the political dictator of England; but the idea of an Imperial parliament open to the Colonies, which he thus presented, may yet find realization in an assembly where a member for Dublin will sit between a member from Calcutta and a member from Sydney, in debating the fate of some great world policy of to-morrow.

Whether Home Rule is a cohesive or disruptive force was rather well brought out in an interruption of Lord Arthur Hill's in the debate. "I would ask, how is Ireland held now?" exclaimed the speaker rhetorically. "By force, of course," answered Lord Arthur Hill. "I thank the honourable member for the word," replied Redmond. "It is held by force; but

does the present Bill propose to take away that force, which, I presume, means the English army, navy and police? No; it still leaves these forces under Imperial control. But in addition to physical force you would have working on the side of connection and against separation the moral force springing from justice conceded, which the English government of Ireland has never yet had upon its side."

In conclusion he compared the mission of Mr. Morley as Chief Secretary to that of Lord Fitzwilliam, before the rebellion of '98—when, in the words of Henry Grattan, the noble lord was offering to the Empire the affection of millions of hearts:

"I ask you," was the somewhat dramatic peroration, "is the offering of the affection of millions of hearts which the Prime Minister is to-day making to the Empire to be rejected, as was the offering of Lord Fitzwilliam? One thing English politicians must make up their minds about, and that is that this question must be settled, and every moment of delay increases the difficulties and dangers of the position. Every speech conceived in a bitter spirit, by either Irishmen or Englishmen, must tend to increase the evils and dangers of the moment. The spirit in which the Prime Minister has addressed himself to the question and the spirit of large-heartedness and justice which he exhibited has called forth a responsive feeling in the breasts of

the Irish people right round the world. If that be the spirit in which Englishmen address themselves to the consideration of this question, then I have some hope for the near future of Ireland. But if passion and prejudice, if forgetfulness of the history of Ireland and impatience of her faults are allowed once again to sway the public mind and to influence Parliament, I confess I cannot look forward to the near future without the gravest apprehension. Should calamity follow an unwise and hasty rejection of this Bill, we, at any rate, will not be responsible, for we will allow no act or word of ours to intensify the dangers and difficulties of the situation. We make our appeal to-day to the newly enfranchised democracy of England. Eternal will be its recompense if its first great work after achieving its own enfranchisement should be to fill up the gulf of hatred and distrust which for so long a time has divided the two nations, by a just and a wise concession to that national sentiment in Ireland which, however some Englishmen may affect to deride it, has yet dominated Irish character for seven centuries, and must be recognized and respected if Ireland is ever to become, as I fervently pray she may soon become, a peaceful, free and contented nation."

Such, then, was the programme of the man upon whom Parnell's mantle had fallen. At times it seemed as if the ghost of the dead leader hovered over the assembly, as effort after effort to model the Bill failed, and as

restriction after restriction reduced it by degrees from its original greatness of conception. Again and again Redmond protested: again and again his colleagues submitted; but throughout, while he maintained that it was intended to grow like every constitution under English rule, his aims were distorted into a kind of suppressed treason. In spite of the explicit words in the preamble, "without impairing or restricting the supremacy a legislature shall be created," Mr. Chamberlain maintained the supremacy was merely "the baseless fabric of a vision." "Even if there were no temporary provisions in this Bill, even if it were in the mind and view of the Government a final settlement, what could we say after the significant and remarkable speech that was made the other day by the honourable member for Waterford?" That speech contained the following peroration, in which he said that, though he would vote for it, it was only because, like a toad, it bore a precious jewel in its head.

"We have endeavoured," he said, "using such opportunities as were open to us, so to mould the Bill that it would satisfy what we considered to be the necessary conditions of a reasonable settlement of the question. I regret now, at the end of this discussion, to think that every single effort of ours in that direction failed. Those portions of the Bill which we regarded as objectionable and dangerous we voted against, but

our votes were overborne; those portions which we considered faulty and defective we endeavoured to amend, and again our amendments were rejected by the Government and by the overwhelming majority of the House. The changes which have been made in the Bill are, in my opinion, changes which, on the whole, are for the worse and not for the better.

"As the Bill now stands, I maintain that no man in his senses can any longer regard it either as a full, a final, or a satisfactory settlement of the Irish Nationalist question. The word 'provisional' has, so to speak, been stamped in red ink across every page of the Bill.

"No man can claim that such partial and restricted powers as are conferred by this Bill can by any human ingenuity be invested with any element of finality."

It was on the misunderstanding, therefore, of a term which, had it been submitted to the electorate, could have been thrashed out till every possible misconception had been eliminated, that the Home Rule Bill was wrecked. The onslaught had put an axe into the hands of every opponent of the Bill, and by the time it came back, not the word "provisional," but the word "dead" was stamped across it: and another generation had to pass before it could be revived.

It was in the nature of every constitution to develop, Mr. Redmond had explained, and if Ireland showed a

capacity for self-government it was bound to grow with the consent of England. Even were he to have given the guarantee required, it would not have been worth the paper it was written on, for as long as the Imperial Parliament remained supreme, the Irish Parliament could never pass immutable laws. But if that guarantee was thought to be refused from motives of bad faith, or that they were actuated by designs hostile to the English Government, he for his part disclaimed any such intention.

CHAPTER V

THE INDEPENDENT

1893—1900

THE failure of the Home Rule Bill and the impossibility of fighting the House of Lords on an Irish issue, made politicians pause awhile. Two things in particular, however, called for attention. The one was the land question, the other that of the political prisoners, in both of which cases the active spirits of the Redmondites acted as a spur to the policy of those who, as Mr. O'Brien had observed, "did not wish to harass Mr. Gladstone into his grave"—a phrase which was rather incriminating, if used retrospectively.

The land question was really as important as the Home Rule question, but perfectly distinct; and speaking in New York the year before, John Redmond had pleaded for an instant settlement of the case of the evicted tenants. "That Irish question," as he told his hearers, "which in one shape or another has been the cause of almost every man and woman in this hall, or their fathers before them, leaving the shores of their country —that land question which has driven the Irish race

all over the world, and which has meant starvation and ruin and degradation and crime for our people!" That the matter was urgent can be seen from the words of John Dillon, who, some months later, said: "If the Tories ever get back to power before we get Home Rule, there will be the greatest land agitation that has ever been seen."

The amnesty question was a plea for the release of the political prisoners. John Redmond was not himself in favour of their methods: he denounced them as foolish, because not calculated to attain their end, but at the same time he paid them the tribute of respect:

"He would never," he said, "himself find fault with an Irishman, however extreme his methods, if he had suffered for his devotion to the national cause." Indeed he did not stop to consider whether they were guilty or innocent, considering that Gladstone had himself admitted that it was due to them that Ireland owed the present attention to her wrongs. Neither a release nor a special inquiry followed; but he gained his point in establishing the difference between a criminal and a political prisoner. "How is it," he said, "that England has never found any difficulty in deciding what a political offender is when she is dealing with other nations, but in her dealings with Ireland she has never been able to make the

admission that there is any such thing as a political prisoner at all?" It was an important point, and he cited examples showing how England prided herself on being the sanctuary of the world, how she had welcomed Garibaldi, and even on such an act as the Orsini outrage *The Times* had written: "A conspirator against a despotic ruler who himself had seized the throne, and against whom craft and violence, if not justifiable, were at least not to be classed with the guilt of common murder."

It must also be remembered that Mr. Redmond himself had been classed as a criminal. "I remember when Mr. Balfour did me the honour of sending me to prison for a speech which he did not approve of, he said I was not a political prisoner, and I was treated in prison exactly the same as a pickpocket or an ordinary criminal."

The pleading was not without its effect upon public opinion, for when a deputation, including the Lord Mayor of Dublin, called upon Mr. Morley, the Chief Secretary, the latter said, referring to the way the French had amnestied the Communards and the Americans the Secessionists: "Are the only people in the world for whom there is to be no amnesty, no act of oblivion, to be Irishmen whose only fault has been that they have used their talents for the benefit of their countrymen, and done the best they could to raise up the miserable, oppressed

and down-trodden people of their own country? I assure you, at least one great party is anxious for an amnesty and an act of oblivion on your part and on ours."

Meanwhile things were progressing in England, and the sudden announcement of Gladstone's resignation still further divided the two Irish parties. The *Freeman* tried hard to convince its readers that the change in the Liberal party was merely one of persons, not of policy, and that Lord Rosebery was merely Gladstone's nominee. Not so the Parnellite organ, which bitterly complained that this change meant the indefinite hanging-up of the Home Rule programme, and the Redmondites issued the following manifesto:

"As if in mockery of the hopes that were excited in Ireland, the Prime Minister, whose continuance in office was the pledge of Home Rule, is cast aside, and a member of the House of Lords appointed in his stead. In Lord Rosebery and his present Cabinet we can have no confidence, and we warn our fellow countrymen to have none: they will concede just as much to Ireland as she extorts by organization among her people and absolute unfettered independence of English parties in her representatives . . . and we call upon you no longer to tolerate a policy of national subserviency to English party interests, but to carry on, if necessary, the bitter struggle with both English parties

rather than continue to be the scorn of one and the deluded dupe of the other."

On April 8, John Redmond at a meeting in Dublin declared his policy. "The Irish party was," he said, "face to face with the ruin of the Home Rule cause and was in a position of disunion, squalid and humiliating personal altercations, and petty vanities. So that any measure of national autonomy must be hung up till the English cared to give it."

The manifesto was strong as a prophecy: it is mild as a retrospect; for time has confirmed the Parnellite leader's intuition. Two years before, speaking at Dublin on St. Patrick's Day, he had warned the country against a policy of trust with Ireland's leader gone, and not a single man left with his qualities. It was bad enough to have misunderstanding without procrastination: now they were to have both, for, as Sir William Harcourt had said: "While the Liberal party were still in favour of Home Rule, neither they nor he believed the people of England would ever grant Mr. Parnell's Fenian Home Rule." The Roseberyites did not even wish to give Gladstone's; at least until the English electorate had been converted. The Redmondite policy was that the wounds of the country should be healed then and there; that delay could only mean a slow bleeding to death; that the remedy had been admitted by experts, and that the courageous policy which a

physician would adopt in such circumstances would be to save his patient, as he alone knew how, without first careering round the country trying to interest or convince every passer-by.

All the while parties in Ireland were still squabbling: some exclaiming against the "Bosses" of the more numerous party: Mr. Healy protesting against "Machined conventions" and declaring that they "could no more have a treaty with the Parnellites than with the Orangemen," while Mr. Davitt was trying to get rid of Mr. Healy, whom he accused of ambition by saying that worse things could happen to the national cause than the return of such a political prodigal son to the fold of factionism, meaning, of course, the Redmondites.

Above the din of such heartrending vituperation, and as if to remind all of the great days when the chief led his serried ranks to battle, came John Redmond's summons to celebrate the anniversary of Parnell's death. Some thirty thousand, all wearing the ivy leaf, a fitting emblem of the cause, visited the tomb at Glasnevin, but no one tried to estimate the crowds in Dublin. What was chiefly remarkable, however, was the change in the attitude of the clergy, whose anger had abated, and who, it was generally thought, would in the next election be absolutely neutral as between the two sections of the Nationalists.

There were no speeches by the graveside or on the day; but the scene of this pilgrimage of reparation spoke for itself. The chief was at last avenged, and as John Redmond and the little Parnellite group wended their way through the crowded streets they must have gone back many times in thought to that Committee Room where the first blow had been struck that felled the leader and the cause as with one blow.

Perhaps the words of his own speech may have been ringing in their minds: "Let no man in the room foolishly believe that if this debate is carried to a close," he had said, "the matter is going to end here. My belief is that in the moment when by an adverse vote of this party you succeed in driving Mr. Parnell from the chair, and attempt to drive him out of public life and trample him underfoot, that very moment the Irish race throughout the world will be rent in twain, and division will be created.

"I assert my belief that the dethronement of Mr. Parnell will be the signal for the kindling of the fires of dissension in every land where a man of the Irish race has found a home. It is because I look forward with dread and horror to that future, that I have taken my stand so firmly by your side, Mr. Parnell. I believe that the one hope of safety for Ireland and the Home Rule cause is that you should remain at your post or else abdicate your post, having

obtained for Ireland security for the settlement of the question."

The Dublin correspondent of *The Times*, indeed, seemed to endorse the prophecy. "The demonstration seemed to be marked with a tone of despair," he wrote, describing the proceedings in Dublin; "it was the tribute of bitter sorrow for the loss of the only chief who could have made Home Rule successful and who now lay buried in his tomb. There was no reason to doubt the sincerity and significance of the monster pilgrimage, but who can be so sanguine as to suppose that it can have any more practical use in reviving Home Rule than the wailing of the Jews in the restoration of Jerusalem?" In this he was wrong, for when, next day, the Parnellite leader, while he mourned that Home Rule had absolutely disappeared from the list of urgent Imperial political questions, pointed to the hopeless state of divided Ireland, and said that they had no man as leader fit to combine the various elements of their race, "a voice" in the audience exclaimed "Yourself," and for a moment there was an interruption of prolonged cheers.

But this was not to be for years, not till the party had lost all power to influence English thought, and till a noble self-sacrifice upon the part of every single member, and mostly upon the part of John Dillon, laid open the way for a general return to a united party

and policy which more than atoned for the bitter dissensions of the past.

But the revival of Parnellism was not merely a sentimental renaissance of the national idea which had been sadly impaired by the fight between the churchmen and parliamentarians. Parnell had met his death not so much by Brutus' dagger as by a bishop's crozier. Redmond, as his successor, became, as it was said, the "anti-clerical *par excellence*." The term is misleading and its elucidation all-important.

It was thought that at bottom the bishops had been influenced, perhaps unconsciously, by the Unionists in prolonging, if not in starting, the antagonism to Parnell and Parnellite ideas. The idea was not entirely without foundation. As early as October 14th, 1885, Lord Randolph Churchill had proposed to rule Ireland by the bishops, and in a letter to Lord Salisbury had said, "It is the bishops entirely to whom I look in future to mitigate or postpone the Home Rule onslaught. Let us only be able to occupy a year with the education question. By that time, I am certain, Parnell's party will have become more seriously disintegrated. Personal jealousies, Government influences, Davitt and Fenian intrigues will be at work on the devoted band of eighty. The bishops, who in their hearts hate Parnell and don't care a scrap for Home Rule, having safely acquired control of Irish education,

will, according to my calculation, complete the rout. This is my policy, and I know it is good and sound and the only Tory policy." About forty years previous to this, in 1844, Charles Greville had ventured to suggest the same policy, to separate the priests from O'Connell, and thus deprive him of half his power, by getting them under the influence of the Government.

But, throughout, there had been a steady opposition to this policy both in England and Ireland. "If we want to hold Ireland by force let us do it ourselves: let us not call in the Pope, whom we are always attacking, to help us," had said the Radical member for Newcastle, while the opposition to Mr. Errington's secret mission to Rome was furthur evidence of the unpopularity of the attempt. In 1888 a meeting at which some forty Catholic members of Parliament were present had passed the famous resolution that "Irish Catholics can recognize no right in the Holy See to interfere with the Irish people in the management of their own political affairs"—another lay protest which rather resembled in tone that of Sir Wilfred Laurier, when he fought so successfully for the exclusion of the Canadian hierarchy from politics. In Ireland the battle begun over Parnell was continued long after his death, and the whole fury was centred for a time on John Redmond and his little band, which in one General

election was reduced from 29 to 9; and a good specimen of the style of thing a Catholic Parnellite had to face, taken from Bishop Nulty's pastoral, may be given to show the success of the Tory policy.

"Parnellism saps at the very root and strikes at the very foundation of Catholic faith," it ran. "Parnellism, like many great rebellious movements which heresy has from time to time raised against the Church, springs from the root of sensualism and sin. No man can remain a Catholic as long as he elects to cling to Parnellism. The dying Parnellite himself will hardly dare to face the justice of his Maker till he has been prepared and anointed by us for the last awful struggle and the terrible judgment that will immediately follow it. I earnestly implore you, then, dearly beloved, to stamp out by your votes at the coming election the great moral, social, religious evil which has brought about so much disunion and bad blood amongst a hitherto united people." Indeed, Parnellites were often excluded from Mass and the sacraments, and it is a wonder, as someone had said, the whole following of Parnell did not belch forth a Catholicism presented in such a distorted and loathsome form.

The controversy was a heated one as the Parnellites and McCarthyites defined their positions; but John Redmond, the leader, was throughout more unclerical than anti-clerical. "Parnell's leadership is a political

question, we admit," would say the bishops; "but in this case we forbid you to have him on moral grounds." "We fail to see the moral relevance of a political leadership," would reply the other party; "but, in any case, we only have him on the grounds of political necessity." "We, as pastors of the Catholic nation, have a right to direct politics," exclaimed the bishops. "We, as Nationalists, recognize no religious interference in politics," replied the others. In fact, Mr. Parnell was to the Irish Catholic bishops what Mr. Bradlaugh was to the Protestant Anglican members of Parliament. The only difference was, that one had committed a dogmatic and the other a moral crime; but in both cases John Redmond could only see a confusion of ideas in thus trying to deduce a political incapacity from a moral fault and in not making a distinction which has been made times out of number by the Popes in their dealings with the sovereigns of the world.

Such denunciations of a political cause purely from the personal delinquency of a leader could only have been tolerated in the Middle Ages, it had been thought. It would have excited much merriment as a joke had the gay courtiers of Louis XIV. awakened one morning to find that the whole Bourbon dynasty had been declared incapable of sitting on the throne of France by the Pope, owing to some Versailles scandal. All England

would certainly have torn the man to pieces who would have ventured to propose the recall of Nelson on the eve of Trafalgar on the plea that the national honour required it, because a letter of intrigue with Lady Hamilton had been found dropped by him at a Portsmouth tavern. In Ireland it left men dumb with surprise; but throughout England it was greeted with a shout of Unionist triumph, for it proved that Englishmen could now rule by the bishops, as Lord Randolph Churchill had always maintained. Mr. Justice O'Brien, in a judgment in an election petition, declared the Church to be then nothing more than a vast political agency; while the organ of the Redmondites remarked that "they were influenced by the conviction that such action as the bishop and clergy are now judicially declared to have pursued in South Meath constituted an imminent and deadly peril to the cause of Home Rule." This was in the year of Parnell's death; the next year proved it; but in the meanwhile the controversy raged on.

It was in vain that it was pointed out that the Roman Catholic Archbishop had welcomed Mr. Morley, the politician, to Ireland, much as he deplored the infidel. In was in vain Boulanger was pointed out as an example of Catholics making a legitimate political use of a man of dubious private life. It was answered that any stick was good enough to beat a ministerial

dog with. Even the *Weekly Register*, which had never cared for Parnell—the heretic whom three of their lordships had always thought unfit to be a leader—declared, "We know of no law which forbids men to avail themselves of the political services of persons of evil conduct or heretical belief," and maintained, "We should as little suspect a Catholic voter of breaking the sixth commandment because he supports Mr. Parnell as we should attribute to a Catholic voter for Mr. Morley a worship of Mirabeau." Michael Davitt's protest, not concerned with the ethical so much as the political aspect, struck the keynote of the situation when he said: "I contend that the humblest voter in our land has the right, as against the entire hierarchy and priesthood of Ireland, and the whole Church, to the formation of his own political views and the free exercise of the franchise which the law confers upon him."

But quite apart from these speculations, John Redmond maintained, from quite a different point of view, that this clerical interference was killing Home Rule in English public opinion. In this he spoke as a statesman, for he saw its effect would be disastrous upon the great masses of the English electorate. Nor was he wrong, to judge from a speech made by Lord Salisbury. "Can you imagine," he said (*Weekly Register*, Report, 1892), "the Archbishop of Canterbury summoning his parishioners and resolving that there should be a change in the

leadership of the Conservative party." The suggestion was greeted with laughter, but it was a serious matter, as he went on to observe because it brought home this to the English electorate, that they were being asked to place Ireland under a hybrid secular-ecclesiastical power, and in so placing Ireland, place their Protestant fellow-countrymen, who undoubtedly would receive no consideration from this novel and monstrous authority. It was in vain that, when the Parnellite leader returned to Parliament with his followers, elected by 70,000 voters, he tried to reassure the opponents of Home Rule against the Rome Rule scare; the fact of his own diminished ranks spoke against his contention.

Throughout, it was the Unionist policy to keep down Parnellism through the priests if possible, while even among Catholics, a large Unionist protest signed by the Duke of Norfolk and most of the leading Catholic peers against Home Rule was based entirely upon the fear that a Home Rule Parliament might limit the clerical power. "We believe," it concluded, "that under these circumstances a section of the Irish people would be brought into conflict with the Church, and we cannot look forward to such a struggle without the gravest apprehension; and for this, among other reasons, we as British Catholics, are opposed to the policy of Home Rule." It was probably such considerations that dictated the thorough policy of the Redmondites by which the

country should become truly national—viz., that nothing short of an independent parliament could put an end to such an abuse, and that the national idea of unity alone could put a stop to sectarian dissensions.

In spite of the controversy that raged, weakening the party almost to death, there were not wanting, however, signs of vigour. In fact, the very bitterness of the struggle towards reunion was in itself a testimony to the Parnellite policy and the Anti-Parnellite sincerity. Another sign of health was the formation of the Recess Committee—the beginnings of the agricultural movement under Sir Horace Plunket, in which effort he was very sympathetically met by John Redmond until an anti-Home Rule policy was supposed to be discovered in it. But year in and year out the fight for unity went on, Mr. McCarthy saying that unless they reunited they must give up Home Rule for a generation, while Dr. Kenny still kept up the original controversy that the Irish bishops had accepted the dictation of the English conscience. This was somewhat *à propos*, as it was Unionist policy to try to secure the political allegiance of the hierarchy by giving them doles of educational concessions. Thus a union with the Unionist Government eventually left them with nothing but promises. Redmond's policy, on the contrary, was all for an absolute independence of British parties in Parliament and by persistent opposition to

extort the Catholic University Bill they so much desired.

In 1896 Mr. Justin McCarthy resigned the Chairmanship of the Anti-Parnellite section of the Irish Party. It was expected the leadership would fall on Sexton, but, instead, he retired from Parliament to become manager of the *Freeman*, where he has since acted as the brain of the party. The election of Dillon by 38 against 21 showed that the wounds were still open. One important attempt at reunion was made by the convention of the Irish race from all parts of the world, which met in Dublin, but it was for the most part dominated by the Bishop of Raphoe's speech on Financial Relations, while the only resolution which might have led the way to unity, Father Flynn's, proposing to build a golden bridge to admit the Parnellites and Mr. T. M. Healy, who was now also ostracized by the Anti-Parnellites, was scouted as a delay—and delay, said the meeting, spelt damnation.

Nevertheless, on the third day, a resolution to adopt an active policy and abandon all alliances with English parties was in itself a tribute to the policy of the Redmondites, whose first principle it thus accepted. It was not without cause, therefore, that the Parnellite leader resented the withdrawal of the olive branch offered to them. As to Mr. Healy's party excommunication, it reminded him of the "Ingoldsby Legends," he

said, the "political Jackdaw of Rheims" having with bell, book and candle been subjected to every curse, but his feathers seeming never one whit the worse.

The next year, 1897, he proposed his own plan—that if disunited as parties, they could at least be one in policy. For this he proposed at the Mansion House, towards the beginning of the year, the foundation of an Association of Independent Nationalists, with the following aims: (1) National self-government; (2) Full civil and religious liberty; (3) Independence of all English parties; (4) Manhood suffrage; (5) Redress of Irish financial grievances; (6) Amnesty; (7) Land law reform and the development of Irish resources. It is true that, even if united, the party would not have been sufficiently numerous to turn the scale in Parliament, but public opinion, at least, would not be so demoralized. But even this was not taken up with avidity, and towards the end of the year we find him expressing the fear that 1898—the centenary year of the great Irish rebellion against British rule—would dawn over a weak, divided and demoralized people.

Two great events, however, characterized these years. The first was the Local Government Act: the second was the report of the Financial Relations Commission.

The supposed business incapacity of Irishmen had been one of the factors in the defeat of the Home Rule Bill of 1886, and Lord Salisbury had looked upon Local

Government as worse than Home Rule. It was tried as an experiment and proved a tremendous success—as John Redmond said years later. "It was not a half measure. It conferred full and complete control on Irishmen—as fully and as completely as was conferred on the English people. It worked a social revolution: it completely disestablished the old ascendancy class from its position of power and made the mass of the Irish people masters of all the finance and all the local affairs of Ireland," and in principle was the greatest tribute to the feasibility of that full measure of National self-government which has ever been advocated by John Redmond as the only possible solution of the Irish question.

The second great event was the report of the Financial Relations Commission, signed by John Redmond, among others, which established beyond dispute the fact that Ireland had been regularly taxed over £2,500,000 a year beyond her share. This had always been his own contention, and he formed one of the leading men in favour of an All Ireland movement in favour of remedying the grievance. An Irish Financial Reform League was started, but with no great success, for in the discussion of every Budget for ten years in the House of Commons Mr. Redmond has had to repeat the same protest.

After 1898 the Government, embarrassed by a con-

tinuous and persistent Opposition, began to go back to that state of academic sympathy with the Irish demand of the days of Isaac Butt, from which Parnell had raised it. Mr. Balfour had declared a short time before that it filled him with dismay that Parliament should tamely acquiesce in a state of things which practically deprived two-thirds of the population of Ireland of higher educational facilities. It became evident that no initiative would be taken, and as there was no strong party to compel it, this fact became one of the most potent causes which accelerated the movement towards unity in Ireland.

"The announcement by the Duke of Devonshire," wrote the *Guardian* shortly after that event, "that no bill dealing with the Irish University question is to be expected from the present Cabinet, will give sincere pleasure to the Opposition. This is a statement which cuts from under the feet of Unionists their strongest argument against Home Rule, and it exhibits the Government in the unenviable light of yielding to the most illiberal and prejudiced sections of their own supporters. What the Duke of Devonshire has now done, is to make many Unionists feel that the refusal to give Irish Roman Catholics a University, falsifies their main contention since 1886. We do Ireland no wrong, they have said, by denying her a Parliament of her own, because all that a Parliament of her own could justly do for her,

can and will be done for her by the Imperial Parliament. If the Duke of Devonshire's reading of Ministerial intentions proves true, Unionists can say this no longer."

As the grievance was acknowledged and not redressed, it was evident that nothing but the old battering-ram policy would avail, and here came Redmond's chance. Not only had the party to be reunited, but a leader had to be found who could harmonize all the discordant factions. The situation called for a man; accordingly a man had to be found. An Irish Unity Conference met in Dublin in April, 1899. Again John Redmond proposed a previous interchange of opinion as to the nature of the new unity. By some misunderstandings and delay of letters he could not avail himself of the invitation to the Conference. Accordingly one of the most important elements, namely, the representation of all parties, was wanting in the Conference, and though some papers described it as having arrived at its decisions with remarkable celerity, the Press on the whole was pessimistic. "It is doubtful whether the proposals for a reunion of the Nationalist faction in Ireland were ever seriously meant," wrote *The Times*. "At any rate, the conference which was held yesterday resulted in a complete and ignominious fiasco. There is no reason to believe that reunion in any true sense of the word was even conceivable, and in any case, the conduct of the negotiations by the majority

made it evident that the offer to put aside personal quarrels was a sham."

The passage is at least a valuable document of testimony to the difficulties the Irish members had to face and likewise to the spirit of self-sacrifice and perseverance which characterized the leaders. There were, however, other forces at work in the direction of consolidation, among which may be numbered the proposed redistribution of Parliamentary seats, which, according to the Unionist scheme, would have reduced the Irish party from 103 to 74. Another factor which *The Times* had not reckoned with was the deep spirit of patriotism which in all their differences had actuated Irish leaders. This was seen in the noble self-sacrifice by which John Dillon resigned the leadership: for in moving the adjournment of the election of the Chairman in the first week of February, 1899, he said:

"I move this resolution with a desire to clear the ground as far as may be for the work of reuniting the Irish Nationalist representatives, and in order to bring the party into line with what is undoubtedly the overwhelming sentiment of Ireland—the wish to see the Irish Nationalist representatives in the House of Commons reunited into one party on the lines of the Parnellite party, as it existed from 1885 to 1890. I wish to state, therefore, that I shall not be a candidate nor allow my name to be proposed for any office, in this or any other

Irish party, during the continuance of the present Parliament, and I trust that it will be felt that by adopting this course I am doing all in my power to promote that union of the Nationalist forces upon which Ireland has set her heart."

The words were in every way worthy of the situation and of the man, but their effect was not instantaneous. The Rev. John FitzPatrick, a priest resident in Nice, seeing an impending deadlock, wrote as a friend of Sir Charles Gavan Duffy that the three leaders of separate wings, Dillon, Redmond and Healy, should employ that veteran Irishman as arbitrator of their differences. John Redmond accepted, but suggested a preliminary conference of the representatives of each party to discuss the basis of union. J. Dillon, who had done all in his power to bring about unity, was somewhat annoyed, expressing the disgust of the people of Ireland at the delay rather vehemently. A suggestion that Redmond should become leader for 1901 and Dillon for 1902, lest either should be allowed to exercise too much influence upon their fellows, survives as a political curiosity. Mr. Blake wrote to William O'Brien to allow the people of Ireland, through the United Irish League, to settle the squabble of the members; while Michael Davitt, in despair of ultimate success, feared that reunion would only mean that the whims of the leaders would prevail instead of the wishes of the people. The publication of correspondence

in self-defence by Mr. Dillon and Mr. Redmond, however, revealed the wisdom of a policy of a previous conference, Mr. Healy saying that he would certainly join in any request to convene his own party, and that John Redmond's suggestion had a practical ring about it.

Towards the autumn a not insignificant event in John Redmond's favour was a public invitation on the part of the New York Irish authorities to himself and the Lord Mayor of Dublin to visit the American capital, thus selecting, as it were, the chief of the civic and the parliamentary representatives of Nationalist Ireland.

About the same time the further publication of correspondence between John Redmond and Healy seemed for the moment to throw the odium of failure of negotiations upon John Dillon's shoulders and make Mr. Healy appear one of the most ardent for conciliation, and on the whole to prove the absolute necessity of the preliminary conference John Redmond had always suggested.

"In case your advances are again repulsed," wrote Mr. Healy in one letter to Mr. Redmond, "you may at least find consolation in the knowledge that the Irish people who are now said to have undertaken for themselves the task of restoring unity, will then be better able to judge of the sincerity of some of their adjutants. For my own part, such a rebuff would make me willing, if necessary to join with any of the rank and file in a call for a

convention of the Irish people to consider the situation and provide for the future."

Mr. Redmond accepted the suggestion to lay the case once more before the promoters of the conference, though he admitted that all this action on his part might open the door to future misconception. Hence, Messrs. P. J. Power, M.P., Jeremiah Jordan, M.P., and Mr. Thomas Healy, the Conference Secretaries, were requested to bring about the original suggestion of John Redmond, for a preliminary deliberative conference to discuss the terms of union, suggesting as an ostensible reason for this change the fact that Mr. Healy, who had formerly refused, was now willing to take part in the conference. The result was a general agreement to call once more the representatives of the different sections.

Mr. T. C. Harrington, the chairman of the conference, made it his special duty to harmonize in every possible way the conflicting factions, so that it was in no small degree owing to his personal action that a deadlock was avoided and the path to future union smoothed; while the *Freeman*, which had been hitherto rather hostile to John Redmond, admitted that it was a pity that the party had not been allowed an earlier opportunity of considering the suggestion of John Redmond and his friends. Still the work was not accomplished at once, although the conference had done

much to pave the way, and the *Freeman*, not too sanguine about the situation, was inclined to think that all such conferences tended rather to accentuate than diminish the points of difference.

Meanwhile, in spite of their numerical insignificance, the Parnellites had still great power. John Redmond and the Lord Mayor of Dublin were untiring in their determination to make the Parnell celebrations a success and to bring back to the hearts of Irishmen the love of their great leader, and make the erection of a public monument not merely a party question, but one of national importance. And although the Lord Mayor was described by his opponents merely as Mr. Redmond's Sancho Panza, the success of the American mission was beyond their most sanguine expectations. Invitations poured in from every side, and the greatest enthusiasm greeted their advent. In New York they received the freedom of the city, and though they accepted few, they received dozens of welcomes from the other cities. When once the delegates returned to Dublin they found the Parnellite revival was in full swing; while when the Conference took place, the letters which were received from men who formerly had opposed Parnell most bitterly during the last years of his life, like Dillon, McCarthy and Blake, showed that in addition to a return to the policy, there was also a return to the man. Needless to say the success of the American

mission, half the proceeds of which were given to the Parnell statue fund, and half to pay off the debt on the Parnell estate, made John Redmond in a sense the man of the hour.

But there was a still more powerful factor at work, and this was brought out in a speech by John Redmond, at the Mansion House early in 1900, in which he said that in view of the difficulties of England in the South African war, there was no telling what advantages might not arise from Ireland pressing vigorously forward her claims for Home Rule and educational equality, and he thought that the man who under these circumstances should stand in the way of Ireland speaking with a united voice in Parliament would be nothing short of a criminal.

The South African war may, therefore, be said to have been one of the most potent influences in favour of the reunion of the party; for without some great national enthusiasm the sordid faction fight might possibly have continued for years until the whole body of Irish public opinion had been discredited. Hence it was with a feeling of great national emotion that, when at last the reunited party met in Westminster, the following resolution was passed:

"That in the name of Ireland we declare at an end the divisions which hitherto separated the Irish Nationalist representatives, and we hereby form ourselves into one

united party, in accordance with the principles and under the constitution of the Irish Parliamentary party from 1885 to 1890."

The second great resolution was the election of Mr. Redmond to the leadership of the reunited party. And it must have been not without a certain sense of triumph that the leader of the small Parnellite minority took the chair, feeling as he must have done that the principles of Parnell had at last been vindicated by experience, and that his own loyalty to his chief had been at last justified. For the election had decided not only a question of persons, but also one of principles; and it was the revivification not only of the authority of Parnell, but also of his policy of combat.

CHAPTER VI

1900

THE NEW LEADER

"IF there is one wish which I wish the Irish cause," Gladstone is reported to have said shortly after Parnell's death, "it is that the champions may be reunited." It would, therefore, have been with feelings of pleasure that he would have read of the ending of the split, and the election of a successor to Parnell in the person of his champion, John Redmond.

It was really a political event of the highest importance, but the South African War, just then at its most critical stage, had thrown all home politics into the shade. Notwithstanding this, however, it did not fail to arrest the attention of the more serious representatives of the Press. "This is an important and significant event," wrote the *Daily News*, "which in quieter times would have excited the greatest possible interest. Even as it is, to those who look beyond the situation of the hour and the lifetime of this Parliament, the election of Mr. Redmond, and all that it means, is food for thought: for there are few men in the House who come near to him

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ELISHA.

[*To face p* 128.

in point of dignity and eloquence, and certainly no man who understands better the way in which that peculiar assembly should be addressed."

The Times could only see in the election of John Redmond the strengthening of the pro-Boer element: "The whole force of the Irish Nationalists," it wrote, "is once more reunited as in the days of Parnell. Mr. Redmond is an able figure and a considerable Parliamentary figure, and it may be that if he were to act independently he might put forward a policy upon which it might not be impossible for a British Government to meet him. Unfortunately, however, Mr. Redmond has been chosen to represent the most violent and most irreconcilable firebrands of Irish Nationalism. We have to deal with a declared attitude of hostility on the part of the Irish Nationalists towards the British Empire which cannot be ignored. There is abundant evidence to show all that Irish Nationalists are not only in sympathy with the enemies of the British Empire, but that they are using whatever influence lies in their power to embarrass our Imperial policy."

However much to be deplored, this open declaration of hostility was not without its wholesome lesson, and, as the *Speaker* observed, was a thing that required to be understood, for even supposing the war successful, the difficulty would only be beginning. "Imagine British supremacy vindicated and Dutch nationality suppressed,"

it wrote. "Let Boer aspirations be denounced as treason and let the subjugated provinces be occupied by 10,000 British soldiers. With the history of Ireland before him, is there any thoughtful citizen who imagines that the programme we have sketched out will produce loyalty and contentment from the Zambesi to Table Bay; will twenty years of resolute government do it? Can Dutch sentiment be killed by kindness? For those who have eyes to see, the reunion of Ireland has its significance in relation to our South African difficulties no less than to our troubles at home."

The attitude both of the leader and the party, however, was only what was to be expected when it is remembered that the great mistake of over-centralized governments is precisely that treatment of sub-nationalities of the empire as so many counties of one kingdom, absolutely ignoring the omnipotent factor of politics—nationality. Ireland had never been treated as she really is, a separate nation, yet it is always resented when she refuses to act as she cannot possibly do, like a mere county. The mistake is with her rulers.

Nationality is a fact to be reckoned with, guided, humoured, and developed within proper limits; to ignore it, or attempt to suppress it, is not only going against one of the fundamental laws of politics, but one of the unalterable laws of Nature. If to-day South Africa is loyal, and Ireland still disloyal, it is entirely due to the

fact that Ireland's national aspirations are thwarted at every turn, while those of the Dutch have been respected. Hence the attitude of the party was in the very nature of the situation, and must ever remain the same until that situation has been altered. This fact is the key to the understanding of the man.

"The action of the Irish party means this," continues the *Speaker*, "that we are about to be reduced by their concerted action in the present crisis to the same dilemma as vexed England fifteen or twenty years ago. Ireland has proved herself a sub-nationality within the Empire. The French Canadians may or may not be such a community, the Cape Dutch may or may not be, but the Irish most undoubtedly are. With such a policy there are two ways of dealing. You may occupy militarily and govern despotically, or you may grant local self-government: there is no other way. Every day increases the bitterness of the situation and makes the impossibility of a third course more impossible. There must be no more talk of predominant partners; it is not a position to be out-flanked by gentlemanly breaches of faith. A Liberal will have soon to ask himself the question once for all: 'Am I in favour of Home Rule or Coercion?' and unless he knows his own mind, the party named may a few months hence be once more involved in one more national crisis." (February 10th, 1900. *Speaker*.)

This, of course, would depend upon the power of cohesion that existed in the party and which rendered the Parnellite policy possible; but apart from the arguments in favour of unity, there were several reasons why John Redmond should have been selected.

The reunion, coming as it did immediately after that very Radical alliance had been finally cast off to which the strong and formidable dictation of the old Irish party had been sacrificed, it was in every way fitting that John Redmond, who had advocated this step, should succeed to Parnell; and though Mr. Dillon said he did not like the word "return" to the policy of the party before 1890, he could not help admitting the fact. But what was chiefly felt in Ireland was, not the necessity of the Parnellite theory so much as permanence of the Parnellite action. "Everybody knows," wrote the *Irish People*, "that if that agreement is to be continued and to have any permanence, it can only be by making the organized power of the people more widespread and formidable than ever. The country will require some guarantee of the sincerity and the continuance of the new treaty of peace. The only real guarantee available is the presence of an organization of the people, impartial enough to be independent of all the sections, and strong enough to impress them all." An organization of this kind was found in the United Irish League, which has continued to increase, and from

which the party draws all its effective strength and the nation its unity. Probably, without it, nothing could have ensured his position as leader. It forms the national base of the pyramid of which John Redmond is the apex, and what was a still further guarantee, was that it seemed generally recognized that the right man was in the right place.

"The suavity of Mr. Harrington and the fluency of Mr. Healy have all their proper place," wrote the *Daily Chronicle*, "but there is only one man in the party who is capable of recalling, however faintly, the iron hand and iron discipline of Mr. Parnell, and that man is John Redmond." Perhaps, however, it was more his "urbanity" than his other qualities which were necessary to unite the sympathies of men who for years had poured forth all the vials of their wrath upon each other. Indeed, as Frank H. O'Donnell suggests, he seemed the only possible leader. Mr. Justin McCarthy had always been more in love with literature than politics. John Dillon he calls "the special representative of Maynooth." Mr. Healy was too much of an individualist either to form or follow any party. Mr. W. O'Brien's wonderful powers of organization made him for a time leader in all but name, but only for a while. Therefore, quite apart from questions of personality, it seemed fitting that if it were really a return to the Parnellite policy, none could be more worthy of the

position than the man who had kept his banner flying, and eventually converted back to his principles those who with such disastrous results had abandoned them. "Mr. Redmond, the chief of the rival faction," writes Mr. F. H. O'Donnell, "had conducted the affairs of his miniature party with marked dignity and courtesy. None of the foul memories of the sweeping-brush era soiled his name. He had touched with perfect good humour even the quarrels of his rivals, as when, borrowing an incident from the 'Ingoldsby Legends,' he suggested in connection with Mr. Healy's protean attacks on his beloved comrades that

> "'Dillon with awe when his tricks he saw,
> Said the devil must be in that little jackdaw.'

And the gratification of having such an urbane, prudent, and humorous presiding authority in the common chair may have sensibly facilitated the restoration of external unity between the rejoicing fragments."

In addition to this, John Redmond was already a a *persona grata* with the House, where since his Home Rule speeches of 1893 he commanded both respect and attention where others might only tire or amuse. Thus the *Daily Telegraph*, speaking of the new leader, said: "Mr. Redmond totally lacks Mr. Healy's mastery of detail, and that earnestness of Mr. Dillon, which, in spite of its strident tiresomeness, produces a certain effect upon the House. The quality upon which Mr. Parnell's

successor depends is a power of sustained dignity and eloquence of statement in which he stands almost alone in the House. He can deliberate without being dull, and be emphatic without being extravagant, which means among all the emotional rhetoric of the Irish benches Mr. John Redmond is the only person who knows how to address the House of Commons with the persuasiveness of Parliamentary decorum."

He was more than this, however, for he was already recognized as one of the five or six who in twenty years' time would be makers of history at Westminster, as Mr. Stead a few months later pointed out in an admirable character sketch. "Among those coming men, not one," he writes, "had achieved such a commanding position as John Redmond." "He is not only the chief of the Irish National party, he is the leader of the only effective Opposition that exists in the House of Commons at the present day. In that position he occupies a place in the British Constitution only second in importance to that of the Prime Minister. It is true that at the present, national prejudices somewhat obscure the truth from the English and Scotch, but in the House of Commons the members last Session began to realize where their power lies, and repeatedly in the course of the debates Mr. Balfour referred to Mr. Redmond as if he, and not Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, were the real leader of His Majesty's Opposition. Therein Mr. Balfour

paid homage to facts. Hence, while nominally only the leader of the Irish National party, Mr. Redmond is really the only leader of the Opposition to the Government in the country. It is a great position for so young a man."

A further point which was beginning to be realized was that John Redmond was not merely Irish leader, but was also a great democratic leader. "Mr. Redmond, as the leader of the Irish Parliamentary party, possesses far greater importance than any merely Irish leader has had for many years past," continues Mr. Stead. "Even Mr. Parnell in the height of his power was much less important to the Empire than is Mr. Redmond, for this reason: Mr. Parnell may be said to have existed solely for Ireland . . . and in the heart of the British democracy there is growing a tendency, democratic and socialistic, which feels instinctively that the Irish Nationalists are their only effective allies." This not only made him welcome in the large cities, but also paved the way for a subsequent intimate connection being established between the Irish and the Labour parties. Another quotation shows that the choice was at once seen to be the right one, and whatever anticipations had been made had proved correct. "Mr. Redmond is the first Irish leader who has given the world any token of the possession of the qualities which made Mr. Parnell so famous. Mr. Redmond then

being called to supreme command, displayed qualities with which he had not hitherto been credited. His readiness in debate, his self-control, his keen appreciation of the vital points of Parliamentary strategy, made him a power in the House of Commons. One of the greatest of our Imperial statesmen, who watches the proceedings in the parliamentary arena, declared last month that in his opinion Mr. Redmond was the ablest parliamentarian in the present (1901) House of Commons. Mr. Redmond is a politician first, a politician second, and a politician third. As an individual entity he is almost unknown to any except his intimates. But he has brought keen intelligence to the study of the science of politics. He has given his mind to it, and spent days and nights in acquiring knowledge of all the niceties and rules of parliamentary procedure. He is not embarrassed by the fear of mutinies in his rear, and he is conscious of being armed with the mandate of the Irish race."

A comparison between Parnell and Redmond naturally suggests itself at this point, though perhaps somewhat too soon, for Redmond is even yet, after ten years of leadership, only where Parnell was before 1886. But the two have not a few qualities in common. Both have commanding personalities. "Parnell is the only person before whom I have seen the House of Commons quail," said Gladstone once. The House has never done that of John Redmond, but there are few who command a

hearing with more respect and authority. Both have a certain regal aloofness born of years of power among their fellows, and if it was true that treating with Parnell was like treating with a foreign potentate, certainly the action of J. Redmond since his return as "Dictator" in 1910 bears no little resemblance to it.

Again, there is a distinct quality of leadership, which among a group in the lobby, in a smoking-room, at a public meeting, or on the benches of the House, singled both out from the rank and file and compels attention. Whether because of the comparative quietness of the present crisis, whether for lack of that personal magnetism which in a sense was Parnell's, whether because of the absence or distance of such tragedies as the famine and the emigration of millions, John Redmond does not evoke that almost hysterical enthusiasm which greeted Parnell wherever he went almost like a sovereign. He is the leader of the Irish race at home and abroad—he will never be the uncrowned King of Ireland like his predecessor, simply because those days are past which rendered such things possible. Even Napoleon himself would hardly be more than a brilliant political leader in times of peace. Where, however, John Redmond gains is probably in that very quality. Redmond is more for times of peace: Parnell for times of war. Redmond could assist in the drawing up of a constitution, suggest valuable additions to render

the working more smooth, help in establishing the new order and settle down in peace, once the irritant of the ancient régime had removed all grounds for further friction. Parnell was a species of political battering-ram, in which all the forces of an angry nation were centred; he could destroy the antiquated forms of Castle government, but it is doubtful whether his mind would ever have got rid of that hostility which to be rational must be based upon objective grievances. In short, it is doubtful if Parnell could ever have built or have forgiven.

Redmond in this respect is superior to Parnell. He could become a Prime Minister of Ireland with the same thoroughness with which he was, and by some is still thought to be, the permanent leader of the Opposition; Parnell could never have taken office, and in this the two bear a striking resemblance to the great Boer generals. De Wet was a man of war. Botha, a man of war and peace. Both were equally patriots; but the latter was superior in that he possessed the qualities of peace. Redmond, whether at the Bar or in a civil appointment, would always have risen; Parnell would have remained unknown except in war—indeed his first speeches had stamped him as a nonentity.

It was with these qualities, therefore, that the new Parnellite leader was enthroned in the Chairmanship of the Irish party as the plenipotentiary of the National

cause. Balance of mind, elevation of thought, dignity of bearing, and a gradual sobering of early exuberances were fitting him yearly more and more for the position and distinguishing him from those of his colleagues who are to-day in exactly the same mental state and political position as they were before twenty years of experience.

It is often said that John Redmond is not such a striking figure as Parnell. The words are misleading. It would be a pity to judge of political capacity by mere picturesqueness of personality. Politics are not picturesque, and a statesman's portrait must always lack the glowing colours of the military uniform and the background of clouds and cannon; nor do parliamentary contests lend themselves to scenic effect. That is, perhaps, one of the reasons why John Redmond as a personality does not strike the casual observer with such vividness as his predecessor. For there was an element of the soldier in that political Bismarck. There was something of the general in that silent and severe leader, as, pale with anger, his arms crossed in front of him, he surveyed the benches of angry members. The Pigott letters, the Treaty of Kilmainham, the O'Shea divorce, all these surround him with a halo of tragedy which would have made a lesser man a hero.

John Redmond lacks all these. But the story of Committee Room 15 and the fidelity of the little band

of devoted followers, the sudden and tragic death of the chief and the heroic and persevering fidelity of his champion to the dead leader's honour and his policy, till almost single-handed he had brought about the return of the whole nation to remorse and homage, is not without an element of the romantic to the student of character. And indeed, were the same scenes placed in an historical setting of the Middle Ages, they would form one of the most dramatic and interesting pages in Irish history.

With very few alterations one can picture some Mediæval king pleading the rights of an oppressed people: one can see him surrounded by his devoted followers with a whole nation at his back. Suddenly a domestic tragedy shocks the world, and with one accord the love of his subjects forgives. His followers renew their oaths of allegiance as does the whole nation, but this has no sooner been done than this pretext is taken to break his power. The enemy require his deposition. The thunders of the Vatican peal forth. His condemnation is nailed on every cathedral door. Then one by one, after having assured their king that his leadership was essential to the triumph of their cause, and besought him to remain steadfast, the great barons and courtiers whom he had helped and loved desert him, and it is left to one of the youngest and least known of his followers to take up his defence. A few months of

strife and the king is dead, and for years the young champion defends his name and honour, all the while calling the nation back to that policy of combat whence they had been drawn by a mock policy of conciliation. Gradually the thunders of excommunication cease: the nation recognizes only too late, as it goes repentant yearly to his tomb, that with their king they had also killed their cause, and after years of strife the barons meet, the rival leaders resign, and out of homage to the mighty dead, elect his young champion to raise the fallen banner and lead their united hosts once more.

Of course, I admit the image is entirely overdrawn. But the Irish have a high sense of the dramatic, and in the event of some other catastrophe dividing Ireland again, the record of a life of fidelity to his leader would probably prove one of the strongest claims which John Redmond would have upon the allegiance of his followers in saving him from a fate from which he, had he been listened to, would have saved Parnell. He had learnt to lead in that best of schools—the school of discipleship.

Everything, therefore, both internally and externally, from the personality of the leader down to the organization of the smallest branch of the United Irish League, was ready for the reuniting of the party. A new lease of life had been given to Irish politics, and the Irish leader threw himself eagerly into the task of reorganiz-

ing the party, arranging for the distribution of parliamentary work, and in every way preparing to continue that independent and persistent opposition which would alone draw attention to the long neglected grievances of his country.

With this purpose he issued the following manifesto, interesting not only because of the personal note of earnestness running through it, but also as a record of work done and to be done:

"To the People of Ireland:

"Fellow-countrymen—

"After nine years of disunion and weakness in the ranks of the Nationalist representatives of Ireland in Parliament, a United Irish Nationalist Parliamentary Party has once more been formed, on the principles and under the constitution of the Irish Party from 1885—1890. This event, as every indication of public feeling and opinion shows, has been heartily welcomed by every section of the Nationalist party in Ireland. It is an event which will, if the Irish people so choose, mark a turning-point in the history of the National movement. For the last nine years the progress of that movement in Parliament and Ireland had been arrested, the efficiency of the Irish Nationalist representatives in the House of Commons was seriously impaired, and

the organization of the people in Ireland, without which a parliamentary party is of comparatively little value, fell to pieces. It is not necessary to revert now to the causes of the disunion which brought about these lamentable results. The chapter has been closed by the wise and patriotic action of the Irish representatives, and the thoughts of men on all sides of the contest that has been waged are now turned on the future and its possibilities.

"As disunion has certainly been fraught with evil consequences, so it is equally certain that union may, under certain conditions, be made the means of once more rendering the weapon which the Constitution has placed in the hands of Ireland potent for the redress of National grievances and the winning back of our right to National Self-Government.

"The opportunities which the party system in Great Britain by its very nature opens up to an Irish party, numerous, united, constant in attendance and independent of all British parties, are known to us by experience. Ministries have been made and unmade by such a party; benefits have been wrested from reluctant and even hostile majorities; policies have been altered to the advantage of Ireland by the steady and sustained compulsion

of an Irish parliamentary force, known to speak for the nation, acting as a single man, and taking advantage of every occasion of attack and defence.

"The opportunities for achievements of such a character are likely in the future to be, not less, but more numerous than at any period in the past. The present time is absolutely ripe with possibilities. The gravest crisis in the memory of living man has arisen in the affairs of the Empire, and no one can tell the moment when 80 Irish members, thinking only of the interests of their own country, may be able to extract from the situation its legitimate fruit. The question is, will the people of Ireland enable their representatives to take advantage of these possibilities?—and the answer to it admits of no delay.

"The supreme question of National Self-Government must be restored to its rightful position as the greatest and most urgent of all political issues, but apart from the question of Home Rule, Ireland stands in immediate need of several reforms of the first importance.

"The land question is still unsolved. It can never be solved till the industry of agriculture—the main industry of our country—is freed of an occupying proprietary by the universal establishment

of compulsory purchase, from the burden which still weighs it down, and by some great scheme for replacing the land in the poverty-stricken districts of the West in the possession of the people.

"The industry of agriculture and all the other industries of Ireland are the victims of a system of over-taxation, the most iniquitous in its conception and in its results of any in the civilized world. If the plunder of Ireland which is effected by that system is not stopped, the Irish nation will bleed to death.

"The old policy by which the majority of the nation was, in the past, condemned by law to ignorance unless it forfeited its religious faith is still persisted in as regards that portion of our Catholic people who are anxious to avail themselves of the benefits of University education. Those of our Catholic youth who might naturally be expected to become the leaders of public opinion are still condemned by the spirit of an old-world bigotry to deprive themselves of the advantage of the higher training of the intellect, unless they resort to institutions founded and carried on in principles at variance with their religious convictions. These and many other questions press with daily increasing urgency for settlement. Much may be done to further their

solution, even during the present session of Parliament, if the action of their parliamentary representatives in closing up their ranks and absolutely burying past feuds is backed up by corresponding action on the part of those whom they represent, and if these representatives are now enabled by their constituents to give to the discharge of their duties in the House of Commons that continuous attendance and unsleeping vigilance without which a fighting parliamentary party is impossible.

"Holding these views, and believing that no time should be lost in putting them before you, I now appeal to you to supply, with as little delay as possible, the pecuniary support necessary for the prosecution of a campaign of combat in the House of Commons. The Irish members have done their part by reuniting without any reserve in face of a critical situation. It remains for the people of Ireland to enable them to renew, in face of both the parties in Great Britain, the determined struggle for Irish rights which has been so long and so unhappily interrupted.

"It is impossible, and it would be unjust, to expect that Irish members should not only give their time and sacrifice their own private interests to the advancement of the public cause, but should also bear the whole pecuniary burden entailed by

prolonged attendance at Westminster. I, therefore, ask you, fellow-countrymen, to subscribe with as much promptness and liberality as you can to the sessional fund of the Irish Parliamentary Party.

"I remain,

"Fellow-countrymen,

"Your faithful Servant,

"J. E. REDMOND.

"10 Feb., 1900."

Meanwhile the elections had generally endorsed the action of the party and Parnellism had come to life again.

"In my opinion," wrote Mr. Redmond in October, 1900, "the elections showed conclusively that the Parnellite split is at an end. Wherever contests occurred entirely new causes arose, and everywhere, all over the country, Parnellites and anti-Parnellites were found working together without any trace of the bitterness of the past. In the second place, the elections, in my judgment, have proved beyond the possibility of doubt the universal desire and determination of the people to have a united Irish movement in and out of Parliament based upon Parnell's policy of independence and even of distrust of all English parties—a policy of aloofness and combat. The next thing which, I think, the elections have shown is that the machinery put into the

hands of the people for the election of candidates by the directory of the United Irish League has, on the whole, worked well."

While as to the future of the new party he expressed himself as follows:—

"For myself, I believe there is a great future before the new party. The needs for the immediate future are therefore—firstly, a stern maintenance of unity and discipline in our ranks; secondly, a fearless and aggressive policy of combat in and out of Parliament; and thirdly, a faithful attendance of their duties at Westminster by all the members of the new party. As to what Irish questions will most prominently engage the attention of the new Parliament, I can say nothing. The over-taxation of our country, the claim of the Catholics of Ireland for equal rights with their Protestant fellow-countrymen in the matter of higher education, and the urgent need for the settlement of the land question on the lines of compulsory purchase —all these matters must come up for early consideration, and the chances of their settlement depends absolutely upon the reality of our union and the strength of our organization; but never let us forget that for us the National question overshadows all others."

CHAPTER VII

JOHN REDMOND AND THE CONSERVATIVES 1900—1905

THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—HIS LOYALTY—DEVOLUTION

THE first period of John Redmond's leadership may be said to extend from his election as chairman in 1900, to his defeat of the Unionist Government in 1905. It was chiefly characterized by a return to Parnellite methods, a strong opposition, a prolonged agitation, and as a result Wyndham's Land Act; but it was also significant for the failure of the Government to solve the Irish University question, a return to the Ulster spirit by the abandonment of the principles of devolution, and an attempt to cut down the Irish representation at Westminster.

As far as John Redmond was concerned, his policy seems to have been to extract all the concessions possible, but at the same time prepare the way for the reiteration of the historical demand for full Home Rule. This was, throughout, the root-principle of all his actions, whether

it was the exclusion of Mr. Healy from his party as essential to the smooth working of that body, or the refusal of all half measures, like the Councils Bill later. And it is for this reason that, though eventually the Unionists might have satisfied the Irish party on the question of University teaching and land transfer, their steady refusal to advance along the lines of devolution caused the Irish leader to turn them out of office.

While the Unionist Government was in power the pursuit of this policy was no easy matter: that Government was hostile in spirit and overwhelmingly strong in point of votes, and the first act of the Irish leader was certainly not one calculated to win much enthusiasm for the Irish cause. It was, as everyone remembers, one of open sympathy for the South African republics—a sentiment which had done more to unite the party than any argument could have done, and likewise a sentiment that did more to strengthen English bigotry; and the reunion of the country in one party, one policy, one organization and one leader only gave more effectiveness to the expression of it. To have refrained would have been more diplomatic, perhaps: but it would have been less sincere and, therefore, less Irish. Accordingly, at the very beginning of the session John Redmond, voicing the general attitude of the Irish Nationalist Press, proposed an amendment to the Address to the effect that, on the conclusion of the war, peace should be

settled upon the basis of the independence of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. It was lost by 358 to 66, and as a result has embittered the spirit in which Englishmen take up Irish questions; but it must always be remembered that there is something very subjective about English patriotism: something very objective about Irish.

Ask the average Briton why he went to war with the Boers and he would to this day stumble for an answer: ask the average Celt why he sympathized with the Boers and he will be able to hold forth for an hour on the disastrous results of a suppressed nationality. The South African War was, after all, an open question on which English parties were themselves divided; it might, therefore, become a subject for patriotism: it could hardly become its criterion. And despite the wild bursts of enthusiasm on English defeats in many quarters, every calm critic was struck by the singular moderation of the Irish leader's attitude compared with such displays. "I will plead the cause of the Boers on their own merits," was John Redmond's attitude, and in this sense he was a "pro-Boer"; but "anti-English" is quite a different standpoint, and he would hardly be the man to rejoice in a defeat purely from vindictiveness and merely to diminish the prestige or security of an Empire Irish blood has built, Irish blood preserves, Irish blood peoples.

It was all the difference between mere race hatred, or "Anglophobia," which in Ireland is often a substitute for patriotism, and that higher sense of justice which raises its voice in protest against wars of unjustified aggression. No doubt there are Irish fanatics who would like to see the Germans in London. John Redmond would probably be the last man in the party to rejoice at such a disaster, for he knows that the prosperity of millions of Irishmen in England and the Colonies would be affected thereby. If to be loyal was to rejoice at the downfall of the two republics, John Redmond was certainly disloyal and would probably have said, like Davitt, that he would not purchase Home Rule at the price of Boer independence. If to be disloyal was to wish the downfall of the Empire and plot its destruction, Mr. Redmond was certainly loyal. But in both cases his patriotism was objective, like that of the Earl of Chatham, Burke and Fox, and were the just demands of any of the Colonies to be withheld to-morrow, he would probably be the loudest in giving voice to his rejoicings over their revolt.

The first sessions were, therefore, chiefly noted for the continued attacks upon the Government's policy and action with regard to the South African republics, an attitude which was warmly appreciated by the late President Kruger. "I know of your efforts on our behalf," said the latter in an interview with the leader's brother,

William Redmond. "I look upon the Irish as brothers in oppression. I am well aware of their sympathy and I thank them for being upon the side of justice. I hope they will continue to support us, and feel that in doing so they are supporting the side upon which God will ultimately declare Himself. I could not but be grateful to the Irish people. Tell the Irish members I am deeply grateful for their efforts. I hope they will continue them, as our cause is that of justice and of truth." (Aug. 1904.)

This attitude, however justified in point of fact, was, as far as the English electorate were concerned, the last word on Home Rule for years, and would have been as fatal to a Bill in that direction as the Phœnix Park murders had been to that of 1886. Here again it was a false logic that reasoned on the facts, but as it was made the most of by the Unionist Press it may not be out of place, therefore, to treat it at some length. For quite apart from the action of the Irish leader upon this occasion, there arises the point of his personal principles of loyalty and those of Nationalists in general. Queen Victoria's last visit to Ireland and King Edward's coronation, both of which, coming in close proximity to the South African War, afforded an excellent opportunity for an explicit pronouncement on the subject, ought to prove a wholesome corrective to those who dabble in disloyalty scares.

Speaking in the House of Commons upon the announcement of the proposed visit of Queen Victoria to Ireland, he said:

"Mr. Speaker, I have to ask the indulgence of the House for a moment in order to enable me to say that the Irish people will receive with gratification the announcement that for the future the shamrock shall be worn by all Irish regiments on Ireland's national festival. The Irish people will welcome this graceful recognition of the valour of their race, whatever the field upon which that valour has latest been exhibited—and our people will, moreover, treat with respect the visit which the venerable sovereign proposes to make their shores, well knowing that on this occasion no attempt will be made to give the visit a party significance, and that their chivalrous hospitality will be taken in no quarter to mean any abatement of their demand for their national rights, which they will continue to press until they are conceded."

But though the visit was officially pronounced to be for a change of air, many in Ireland thought it more likely to be the tour of the recruiting sergeant than the recruiting invalid. It was really a diplomatic stroke of the most subtle kind; for if there was an enthusiastic welcome from the nation at large, which would have been quite out of keeping with the political situation, their loyalty would have been taken for contentment;

while if any scene occurred it would be sufficient to kill Home Rule. It was therefore of the greatest importance that the official attitude of Nationalists should be made clear, more especially as in some quarters expressions were indulged in which were wanting in common respect to a personage who, quite apart from her magnificent qualities as a sovereign, even as a woman has earned the respect and love of every civilized country in the world.

The daily papers swarmed with letters of advice from all quarters, but that of the Rev. P. Lynch, of Manchester, seemed to have seized the situation best on the whole, urging the party to meet the spirit of friendliness which had arisen in England with a like spirit, as disloyalty was always misinterpreted, or as Sir Horace Plunkett once said, "Hostility to the Crown, if it means anything, means a struggle for separation as soon as Home Rule has given the Irish people the power to arm." "The Irish in England," continued the letter, "wish the Queen to be received in that broad and generous manner hinted at by Mr. Redmond in his statesmanlike speech in the House of Commons." This statesmanlike attitude was eventually the one adopted by the official organ of the Nationalists.

"Yesterday's reception," wrote the *Freeman's Journal* the day after the Queen's entry into Dublin, "is indeed a reply to those who declare the Irish people to be so

deep rooted in resentment at the centuries of oppression to which the country has been subjected, that conciliation is impossible even by a tardy concession of justice and liberty. Ireland is eager even yet to respond to any offer of friendship based on liberty and justice."

A still more explicit pronouncement is to be found in the resolution proposed by Mr. Harrington in Dublin, explaining that the loyalty shown was not to be interpreted as a withdrawal of the national demand or that the disloyalty had any but a constitutional significance.

A short time after, the subject was again before the public, when in April, 1902, Mr. Redmond moved the adjournment of the House to consider the state of Ireland, nine counties of which were at the time proclaimed, thus denying trial by jury to over one million and a half, a splendid preparation, he said ironically, for the Coronation, when they would find Ireland, whose good will was of more value to the Empire than all the Colonies put together, standing aloof and disaffected and only represented at that ceremonial by the batons of the Royal Irish Constabulary. That there was any personal disloyalty intended was out of the question, for, speaking in June, 1902, he referred to the King as, in fact, rather popular personally in Ireland, and that any disloyalty was against the Government of Lord Salisbury and its twenty years of coercion: and a short

while before the Coronation every Irish Nationalist received the following letter:

"House of Commons,

"July 31st, 1902.

"(To the Members of the Irish party)

"DEAR SIR,

"At the meeting of the Irish party it was decided to hold a meeting of the party in the City Hall, Dublin, at 12 o'clock on Saturday, August 9th, 1902, the day of the Coronation. I trust you will make arrangements to be present.

"Yours very truly,

"JOHN E. REDMOND."

The meeting accordingly took place on Coronation Day, and John Redmond explained the Nationalist position once more. "In Ireland, Edward VII. was not a constitutional monarch," said John Redmond, as reported in *The Times* of August 11th. "No English sovereign had been a constitutional monarch of Ireland since the Union, and that day the Nationalist representatives of Ireland renewed that protest, which had never been allowed to die for a hundred years, against the destruction of their constitution and the usurpation of the government of their country by England. That day," he continued—and he claimed to speak with authority—"Ireland and the Irish party stood on this

question precisely where Mr. Parnell stood in 1886. Ireland had always denied, and still denied, that the Union was binding legally and morally, and they were assembled that day to renew their protest and place it on record."

He then moved the following resolution, which was seconded by Mr. John Dillon, supported by Mr. William O'Brien and others, and adopted:

"That inasmuch as the governing classes of England have made the Coronation an occasion for boasting before the world of the unity and solidarity of the Empire, we, the parliamentary representatives of five-sixths of the Irish people, whose native legislation has been by false and fraudulent methods suppressed, more than half of whose population has been carried away by famine and emigration, and who are at this moment stripped of every constitutional right, of trial by jury, freedom of the Press, freedom of public meeting and of combination, by a system of merciless coercion in order to preserve the domination of an alien section of the population, deem it our solemn duty to declare that Ireland separates herself from the rejoicings of her merciless oppressors, and stands apart in rightful discontent and disaffection."

But far more serious than charges of disloyalty were those brought forward by certain Conservative organs in order to discredit Home Rulers—charges hardly less

serious than those of *The Times* in its famous letters on Parnellism and Crime. There had always existed a certain amount of personal antagonism between Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Redmond, and one of the former's biographers, S. H. Freys, does not hesitate to attribute Mr. Chamberlain's change of attitude on the Irish question to Mr. Redmond's American speeches, extracts from which in distorted fragments are scattered throughout Mr. Chamberlain's apologies for Unionism. They are based entirely on the misreading of their spirit and trying to identify "Independence" with "Separation," and though the Irish leader has often explained the distinction, the misrepresentation continued. But when it came to a charge of personal corruption it was high time that the members of the party should vindicate their characters.

The bitterness of the attack on the party was no doubt increased by their support of the Boers in the South African War, but it was brought to a crisis by the *Globe* newspaper, which, it was generally understood, merely put Mr. Chamberlain's insinuations into more definite words; so that though the paper was technically responsible for the libel of calling the Irish members a "kept" party, the inspiration was really Mr. Chamberlain's.

The words complained of were these—"The same spirit and the same motives that have made Tammany a

synonym for political obliquity have made the Nationalist party what it is: many of those connected with it are the very ruck of the population, whose sole object is a pecuniary one—to make as much money by political jobbery and corruption as they can. And anyone who has had any connection with Irish private Bills or corporation contract and franchises across the water can bear ample testimony to this."

John Redmond at once determined to make this the subject of a question in Parliament, and accordingly on 15th August he brought the matter before the Speaker, not so much as an Irish grievance as because he considered it, first, a breach of privilege, and secondly, because it was a matter that affected the fair name of the House of Commons. He did not complain, he said, of the bitterness of Mr. Chamberlain's Blenheim speech—it was the usual thing they expected; but he did draw a line at a charge of personal corruption. True, the paper had disclaimed any intention to libel Irish members, saying it referred to the American provincial supporters; but this was obviously in substance a deliberate falsehood, for the concluding paragraph had ended with the words:

"It is therefore no hardship upon Ireland to reduce the number of parasites on her national system."

The House agreed that there was a breach of privilege and Mr. G. R. Armstrong, the editor, and

Mr. W. T. Madge, the manager of the *Globe*, were arrested until the pleasure of the House should be known, and the next day occurred a rather dramatic triumph for the Irish party, when the two were called before the bar of the House to apologize. At first the apology was not accompanied by any withdrawal, and Mr. Madge even tried to hedge behind an "I must, I suppose," but the Speaker saw the significance of the point raised by John Redmond, and said sharply, "There must be no quibbling over words. The gentleman must not trifle with the House. Does he withdraw categorically in the same sense I have stated, or decline?" Mr. Madge at once withdrew the charges, and after hearing the censure of the House, the two offenders were allowed to depart.

That it was a moment of personal triumph for Mr. Redmond goes without saying; but the incident is also significant as illustrating the Irish leader's jealous regard both for the House as a body and the honour of those whose cause he had at heart.

The South African War took up most of the time of Parliament during the first sessions after the union of the warring sections of the Nationalist party, so that there were practically no important measures passed for Ireland, but in Ireland the consolidation of the union was becoming evident, and the United Irish League did for John Redmond in September, 1901,

what the Land League had done for Mr. Parnell. John Redmond said "he hoped to see an agitation so prolonged that it would abolish landlordism root and branch." As to the means by which that end was to be attained, he said he "had sufficient faith in the wisdom of the mass of the members of the United Irish League to feel sure that they would translate the general declaration of policy into action, always bearing in mind that the movement, to be successful, should be maintained well within the laws of God and man; for if they had organization they could do anything."

A few weeks later he sailed for America to announce the glad tidings of reunion. The Irish envoys were welcomed with almost unprecedented enthusiasm in the United States, and then went on to Canada, where Sir Wilfrid Laurier and some of the most prominent Canadians took part in the reception given to the Irish leader and his colleagues. The incident did not pass without comment, the *Globe* and *St. James's Gazette* expressing surprise that those who had so lately shed their blood for the Empire should have welcomed its bitterest enemies, the Irish envoys. But both forgot to remind their readers that the cause with which these Canadians sympathized so publicly was identical with the one for which they had themselves been about to fight the Empire some decades back, when luckily a far-seeing statesman had yielded to their demand.

The fruit of this mission was seen a couple of years later, when in March, 1903, the Canadian Parliament by a majority of sixty-one passed a resolution in favour of Home Rule, on the motion of the Hon. John Costigan, and for adopting an address to the King on that question. The address had a strange fate in the hands of the great Imperialist, Mr. Chamberlain, who was then Colonial Secretary. The voice of the great Dominion, which had been the loudest in defending the Empire, and had for that reason been held up by Mr. Chamberlain for the edification of the Unionist electorate, was not listened to when it came to sympathize with a cause to which he was personally hostile. The Colonial Secretary merely replied to the Canadians that his Majesty had nothing to add to the answer made in 1882. But though resented, the action could hardly be ignored, and one cannot get behind the fact that the Colony most resembling Ireland in history, and one which has passed through almost the same crisis, should have thus for the fourth time ventured to suggest the remedy (having already done so in 1882, 1886, 1887) which was tried with such success in its own case.

All this while, though in Parliament little had been done, in Ireland things were going apace, preparing for another period of activity. Mr. W. O'Brien's wonderful organizing powers had devised the United Irish League, and at a National Convention the party was still further

consolidated. One incident, however—Mr. Healy's exclusion from the party—marred the unity, the resolution of expulsion being carried by the Convention in distinct opposition to a vigorous speech by Mr. Harrington and a statement of disapproval from John Redmond. At the same time even amongst Ulster Unionists there was a general tendency towards the adoption of the principle of compulsory purchase of land advocated by the League, though few were willing to adopt Mr. T. W. Russell's plan, costing some 120 millions and establishing an Irish proprietary on the land without loss to State or landlord.

The next year, 1901, saw the further spread of the United Irish League and the increase of its power, and though Mr. Wyndham at first pooh-poohed the idea of its being a revival of the Plan of Campaign, it had grown sufficiently strong by December to get Mr. Conor O'Kelly, Mr. Hayden, Mr. John O'Donnell and others imprisoned upon charges of intimidation. The resignation of the Archbishop of Dublin from the membership of the Board of Education, to which John Redmond had called the attention of the House, brought the Catholic University question once more prominently before the public, with the result that a Royal Commission was appointed; and though there was still much opposition in the Protestant quarters, it was generally felt that some advance had been made in favour of the Catholic

claims: while, of course, the eternal Home Rule question made up the third of the great problems of Land, Religion, Bureaucracy which continually faced the English legislator. Agitation had once more become the order of the day—the *sine quâ non* of all Irish remedies.

That the agitation was a success can be seen from the King's Speech in 1902, which promised an Irish Land Bill. That Home Rule had once more come to life was also evident from Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's action in once more taking up on behalf of his party what Mr. Balfour called the *damnosa hereditas* of the Liberals. The Liberal leader even taunted the Government with having tried to kill Home Rule by kindness. "The contemplation of the Government," he said, "after all that has been tried and done, floundering, in the old familiar, traditional way, between conciliation and coercion, is calculated to confirm us in the conviction of the wisdom of that policy towards Ireland and Irish government which has been and is the remedy approved by the Liberal party."

A lengthy amendment to the Address was put forward by John Redmond late in January, condemning the dual ownership of land and representing that though the Government admitted the grievance, they would do nothing to remedy it, and justifying the action of the United Irish League, which had now some two thousand branches. But one of the most significant

speeches was Lord Rosebery's, who declared that he was distinctly opposed to anything like an independent parliament for Ireland, though he admitted that the Castle government must be reformed, and that the Irish question, too large to be dealt with by any one party, should be settled by the concurrence and patriotism of both, and further maintaining that the open sympathies of the Irish with the Boers had made Home Rule impossible. "We dare not allow a hostile parliament at the very heart of the Empire. Such a parliament, had it been in existence during that war, might have turned the balance between success and defeat." But, as Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman retorted, "An independent parliament goes beyond the case and has never been demanded by any man qualified to speak for the Irish people, and has never been expected or contemplated by us." As for himself, he would declare for the old policy, which was the sole remedy for the condition of that country which is the most serious weakness in the whole British Empire, the most grave blot upon its fame.

In March, 1902, Mr. Wyndham introduced the promised Land Bill, but it was still-born, being withdrawn, after its condemnation by the Nationalist members, in June, and for a short period there seemed an absolute deadlock. The Crimes Act of 1887 was again enforced, and in view of the general discontent in Ireland the King's visit was postponed. A concentration of forces

on the part of the landlords against the United Irish League set the two parties warring, and Lord De Freyne announced that he would seek injunctions against John Redmond and others for interference with his tenants, the Unionist English Press meanwhile calling loudly for "law and order."

But in the end it was found, as always happens, that there was real cause for agitation, and that the "land" question had reached such a critical stage that it could be no longer shelved, but must be solved, and solved at once. And it is in no little measure due to the strong yet conciliatory action of the Irish leader that, if not solved in detail, it was solved at least in principle; and the foundation of a quiet social revolution was laid which, while it reversed the policy of three confiscations and re-established the people on the soil, removed at one stroke one of the greatest obstacles to Home Rule which had any but a sentimental reality. This was the inauguration of the principle of State-aided compulsory purchase. On the whole it was well received. "The reception accorded to the Irish policy of the Government," as the *Annual Register* pointed out, "was in the main friendly, the prevailing disposition among politicians of all parties being to hold that an opportunity was presented for a settlement of the principal local economic difficulty of Ireland, and that it would be wise not to examine in any timid and parsimonious

spirit the financial arrangements by which Ministers conceived that so great a national end might be secured."

The commercial restrictions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had driven the people from industry to agriculture, with the result that to-day three and a half out of the four and a half millions are dependent for their livelihood on agriculture, and there are over half a million holdings, and, as Mr. Balfour once said, the system of land tenure contained almost every fault which it was possible to imagine. An attempt to escape the Poor Law by reducing the number of tenants on an estate caused whole counties to be converted into prairies, and in ten years three hundred thousand families were evicted, a million and a half of the population fled across the Atlantic, and, as Mr. F. J. McDonnell points out, it was only in 1870, after twenty-three Bills in favour of the farmers had been rejected by Parliament in forty years, that the tenant was able to claim compensation for disturbance and a halfway-house established in the doctrine of dual ownership.

In 1881 the three F's: free sale, fair rent, and fixity of tenure, had advanced the problem this far, that it "included a fair valuation of rent, the right of a tenant to sell his interest at the highest market value, and the security from eviction so long as he paid his rent." What the Fenians did in getting compensation for disturbance the Land League did under Parnell for

fixity of tenure and John Redmond's policy, accompanied by the cattle driving, did in enlarging the principle of purchase and thus establishing the people on the soil.

The encouragement of land purchase had been advocated as early as 1847 by Lord John Russell and J. S. Mill; and John Bright, by securing that tenants of Church lands should have a right of pre-emption, established, before 1870, some six thousand peasant proprietors on the land. In 1870, by the Land Act of that year, about a thousand more had been enabled to purchase their holdings by the advance of two-thirds the purchase price. In 1881 Parnell got the advance of three-quarters at terms of five per cent. for thirty-five years; while the Ashbourne Act of 1885 advanced the whole sum up to a total amount of five millions, the necessary money being found in the Irish Church Surplus Fund. In 1891 Mr. Balfour proposed the allocation of thirty-three millions for the same purpose, and some thirty thousand sales took place. Again, in 1896, the Land Act of that year asserted the principle of compulsory purchase of certain estates in bankruptcy, and by the facilities offered, some eight thousand sales took place in 1898, which, as the South African War diminished the value of Consols, dwindled to six thousand in 1899, five thousand in 1900 and only three thousand in 1901. Hence we may say land purchase had come to a standstill.

Such was the state of things when Mr. Wyndham introduced the still-born Land Bill of 1902. It was at once declared insufficient by the National Convention of June. Matters came to a deadlock, agitation centring chiefly around Lord De Freyne's estates. Everything pointed to a crisis. The landlords formed themselves into an Irish Land Trust: John Redmond grouped the tenants around the United Irish League.

At this critical moment came the Land Conference between the representatives of tenants and landlords. At the suggestion of Captain Shawe-Taylor, letters were sent to John Redmond on the one hand, the most prominent landlords on the other. John Redmond warmly accepted the proposal, not so much because it showed a way out of the difficulty, as because it coincided with his first principle, that none but Irishmen can come to a satisfactory understanding on Irish affairs; and that once they are agreed upon the remedy, the English Parliament could have no reason to reject their proposal or doubt its efficiency. The Duke of Abercorn, on the contrary, met the proposal with a typical answer. "It would be merely to give long discredited politicians a certificate of good sense and of just views, we might almost say of legislative capacity to sit in an Irish parliament in Dublin, were we to accept Captain Shawe-Taylor's invitation to join them."

The spirit of conciliation, however, prevailed, and in the

Conference the Irish leader, though himself a landlord, together with Mr. W. O'Brien and Mr. T. W. Russell, represented the tenants; Lord Dunraven, Lord Mayo, Colonel Hutcheson Poë and Colonel Nugent Everard representing the landlords.

The Conference issued its report early in 1903 and advocated three great principles: first, that purchase was the only possible solution; secondly, that in addition to advances being made to the tenant for purchase, the Treasury should grant a bonus to encourage landlords to sell; thirdly, that the large grazing lands should be divided up and the evicted tenants—the wounded soldiers of the land war—should be given hopes of reinstatement.

It was this Conference, called the "Treaty of Peace," which changed everything. "England has now, for the first time since the Union, a chance at a ridiculously small cost of bringing the land war to an end," said John Redmond. Later the House accepted his amendment to the King's Speech—"That it is in the highest interests of the State that advantage should be taken of the unexampled opportunity created by the Land Conference agreement for putting an end to agrarian troubles and conflicts between classes in Ireland, by giving the fullest and most generous effect to the Land Conference report on the Irish purchase proposals announced in the speech from the throne."

Accordingly on March 25th, 1903, Mr. Wyndham, the Chief Secretary, introduced his Irish Land Bill, in which most of these proposals were embodied. The scene was impressive. The Irish leader said he had never risen with such a feeling of responsibility and gratitude. The Chief Secretary replied that the Irish leader's speech was such as no one in his place had made for many a decade; while Colonel Saunderson, the leader of the Ulster Unionists, believed it was about the only measure for Ireland on which he had found himself in substantial agreement with the member for Waterford. But throughout it was understood that the fate of the Land Bill would be decided by the National Convention, which had been summoned to meet in Dublin, John Redmond warning the Government against the misrepresentation of that body and pointing out that it was really the most representative and democratic body in the three kingdoms.

On April 16th the Nationalist Convention met; and though at the same time declaring that self-government was the greatest need of Ireland, accepted the proposed measure subject to certain amendments to be pressed in committee. For the first time these suggestions were listened to. "Amendments," said the National Directorate of the United Irish League later, "demanded by the National Convention have been conceded in committee to an extent to which no great Government measure in

relation to Ireland has ever before been modified in deference to the demands of Irish public opinion"—and as Mr. John Redmond declared, it was "the most substantial victory gained for centuries by the Irish race for the reconquest of the soil of Ireland by the people."

The effect of the Bill was immediate, but not complete. "All that is good in the Act of 1903," said the Irish leader five years later, "came from the expression of Irish public opinion at the Land Conference. All that is bad in the Act, all that is preventing the Act working successfully, was put in the Act in opposition to Irish public opinion, and in defiance of the opinion expressed by the representatives of the Irish people." Still even this cannot blind one to the vastness of the measure by which, as Lord Dunraven puts it, nearly a quarter of a million (228,938) occupying tenants were able to buy their holdings and seventy-seven millions worth of property changed hands "on terms recommended as fair by representatives of tenants and landlords at the Land Conference, accepted as fair by the whole Irish people through their representatives in Parliament, their National Convention, their local bodies, and by every means through which the opinion of a community can be made articulate, and endorsed as fair by all parties in both branches of the Imperial legislature."

What is chiefly significant, as far as John Redmond is concerned, was the endorsing of his first principle of action, that only in Ireland and by Irishmen can the Irish problem be solved. He himself was full of the spirit of conciliation, and he pointed, not without justice, to the Conference as one of the greatest refutations of the indictment of bigotry and incapacity hurled against Irishmen. At the same time there was no doubt that it was the strength of the League which had given him his power; and the same power he now used to urge the settlement of the legislative and educational questions.

The spirit of conciliation inaugurated by the Land Conference and brought to such a successful issue in the Land Act, 1903, might have been the beginning of a new dawn in Irish affairs. For the time the air was filled with schemes and conferences; the attitude of the Irish leader and the Irish Chief Secretary was described as continually "throwing kisses to each other across the floor of the House." In January, Lord Dunraven, the moving spirit of the *entente*, published a long letter in the Dublin papers on the education question. He mapped out a scheme for a great federal University of Dublin which, besides Trinity College, should consist of Queen's College, Belfast, and a new King's College to be established in the Irish capital. It was, upon the whole, favourably received by such prominent Catholic

laymen as Lords Fingall, Kenmare, Chief Baron Palles, The MacDermot, K.C., and others, but the bishops were divided upon the point, and though Protestants, like Colonel Saunderson, were loud in their protests against the supposed clerical domination that would ensue, the Provost and Senior Fellows of Trinity College offered to erect a Catholic chapel for Catholic students.

The failure of the Government, however, to proceed with the matter was the first warning note of an abandonment of the spirit of conciliation. As early as January 22nd, 1904, Lord Londonderry disclaimed any intention on the part of the Government to introduce such a Bill, and later, when Mr. Clancy brought up the same question, Mr. Wyndham said that, though he was personally in sympathy with the measure of a Roman Catholic University without tests, he refused to pledge the Government. Indeed, it was generally thought to press the question might have split the Cabinet. As John Redmond put it in 1907, the scheme was not a scheme that many of the Catholics would have liked if they had a choice; but when it was put before them as a practical scheme, they, after consultation, priests, bishops, laity, said—"Very well, we will give up our personal predilections, because we see the substance of equality in the scheme, and we accept it."

The refusal was a great mistake: for advantage might have been taken of the proposals made by

the same liberal-minded Irishmen who had already solved the land question, and effected a wholesome *rapprochement* in public life. But it was not the acts or even the omissions of the Government leaders which told against the Conservatives so much as the spirit which began to actuate them—for the suggestions indicated tendencies of mind rather than actual measures. It was the gradual submission to the old spirit of Ulster opposition and the sacrificing of the new conciliatory spirit in Ireland which became every day more clear, and though no one could call John Redmond a "devolutionist," he was undoubtedly in sympathy with a movement which was identical in ultimate aim, or at least in principle, with his own, and which he looked upon as inaugurating a new era of thought among Irish Unionists.

The University blunder was only the prelude to another and more serious mistake, when the Government's hands were forced into a policy of hostility to the reform of the bureaucracy advocated by such men as Lord Dunraven and Lord (then Sir Antony) MacDonnell.

Lord Dunraven's scheme of devolution was the establishment of a Financial Council, which had been suggested by the Irish Reform Association, into which the Land Conference had resolved itself. This Financial Council was to have had control of purely Irish

expenditure subject to a power in the House of Commons; a control over Irish private Bill legislation being handed over to a special assembly of Irish representative peers and members of Parliament. It was supported by such men as Lord Rossmore, Lord Southwell, Sir A. Coote, Sir A. Weldon, Col. Hutcheson Poë, Mr. L. and Mr. D. Talbot-Crosbie, Captain Shawe-Taylor, and for a period it seemed as if some arrangement could have been made with the Irish party, many of whom welcomed the new movement. In fact, the chief plank in its platform was identical with that in the Nationalist platform as far as the reform of the system of civil administration of Ireland was concerned; and whole passages from Mr. Redmond's speeches could be substituted for whole paragraphs of Lord Dunraven's "Outlook in Ireland," in which he denounces both the extravagance and the irresponsibility of the sixty-seven departments that cost over three millions a year to keep up an army of 100,000 officials, who receive in pay just half the amount spent on the government of the country.

This administrative Home Rule, or Devolution, as it was called, became the main thread in the tangled skein of Irish politics. The appointment as permanent Under Secretary of Sir Antony MacDonnell, an Irishman, a Catholic and a Home Ruler, embittered the struggle, and the Government became the object of the most rabid attacks from the ultra-Unionists. Early in 1905 John

Redmond continually urged the Ministers not to surrender to prejudices of the minority in Ireland, many still hoping that some understanding might be come to. It was in vain he urged the necessity for a University: it was in vain that he urged the extension of the principle of compulsory purchase to untenanted lands, or pointed to a sudden stop in the working of the Land Act.

The whole controversy raged round Sir Antony MacDonnell, Sir Edward Carson thinking it nothing less than a public scandal "that Sir Antony MacDonnell, a permanent civil servant under the Unionist Government, should still be retained in a position such as he occupied after having evolved a scheme which both the Prime Minister and the Chief Secretary had disavowed." Sir Antony, however, was eloquently defended by Lord Lansdowne, who said of the government of Ireland, "Anybody who has studied that question is aware that there is room for considerable improvement in the old-fashioned and complicated organization. In these circumstances, it follows that Sir A. MacDonnell was justified in assuming that he had certain scope of action: and he certainly acted upon that assumption—acted upon it with the knowledge and approval of the Chief Secretary. It was with the Chief Secretary's approval that Sir A. MacDonnell made himself accessible to persons, of many kinds and descriptions, whose ideas were worth collecting upon

important subjects, and I maintain that in endeavouring to break down the barrier which has too long and too often divided Dublin Castle from the rest of the country, my right honourable colleague has taken a step in the right direction and one for which he deserves the greatest possible praise."

This granted the point always urged by John Redmond and justified the attitude which he took up later in an amendment to the Address, when he pointed to the general dissatisfaction in Ireland, among all classes and creeds, with the system of Castle government, especially as no one who was in any way in sympathy with the people was ever allowed to take part long in the administration of the country; and they were really ruled by permanent semi-independent boards stuffed full with members of the ascendancy party. For weeks the "letters" that had passed between Sir Antony MacDonnell and the Chief Secretary were discussed, and in the end Mr. Wyndham resigned and in his place was appointed Mr. Walter Long. The spirit of conciliation had been once more wrecked by the spirit of coercion and the ending of the Government's reign became but a matter of time. An attempt to cut down the Irish representation was a failure, and a few weeks later Mr. Balfour was defeated upon the administration of the Land Purchase Act of 1903.

The refusal of the Prime Minister, however, to resign

upon a question of such magnitude, raised a con-stitutional point of the first importance, and for a time it became a matter of personal contest between John Redmond and Mr. Balfour.

"I say that the continuance in office of the present Government is a violation of the spirit of the constitution," said the Irish leader. "For my part, I believe it is the duty of all who value that constitution to use every effective means they may have to drive the right honourable gentleman from the position he now occupies. In so far as my colleagues are concerned, we will give and take no quarter, and I believe if the same spirit animated the Opposition as a whole, they would soon make short work of that Government of shreds and patches."

This constitutional point was admitted on all sides, and the parliamentary correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle* maintained that the reputation of the Irish leader had never been higher than in the vigorous and effective use of an oratory which went to the heart of the situation; while even the Conservative Press seemed to admit the weakness of Balfour's position by leaving him undefended on the main point and pleading his retention on the ground of the critical situation of foreign affairs.

But it was more than a mere parliamentary defeat: as Mr. Dillon observed at a banquet given in the Leader's honour in July, "it was the discrediting of that

Parliamentary leader who for twenty years had been the heart and brain of the Unionist party in their struggle against Home Rule," and a greater testimony had never been offered to the power of the Irish party than the policy of redistribution, by which some dozen Irish members would lose their seats, and which he looked upon as the cry of despair of the English Parliament. John Redmond, however, emphasized chiefly the means by which that victory had been brought about. It was entirely a matter of organization, he maintained. It was because the party had been one, representative and organized, and that it represented the electorate and the directory of the United Irish League. It was due also to the fact that that party was pledge-bound and that all its differences were discussed inside the ranks of the party, so that once a decision had been arrived at, they stuck to it ; for, as he is never tired of warning the country, without unity the national forces are absolutely useless.

One, therefore, of the three great difficulties was on the road to solution, the land question. There still remained two, the educational or Catholic University question and the Home Rule or bureaucratic question, both of which were left to the Liberal Government to deal with.

CHAPTER VIII

REDMOND AND THE LIBERALS

1905-1910

I.—THE EDUCATION BILLS AND THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

FROM the moment of the defeat of Mr. Balfour to the return of the great English democratic party after an exile of twenty years, John Redmond's policy was to show the electorate of both countries that the reform of bureaucracy was the real Irish grievance and that the Home Rule question was once more the great issue in practical politics. Speaking in April, 1905, he had pointed out how unconstitutional was the government of Ireland (so mischievous, indeed, as to justify separation), but that at the same time he was profoundly convinced that a compromise could be arrived at within the constitution—in all essentials on the lines proposed in 1886 and 1893.

This had been, of course, the whole-hearted and generous Liberal programme for which the party had suffered twenty years of exile ; but in that time there had arisen moderate or half Liberals. To these he

addressed himself in his speech of November 10th at Glasgow. "Some Liberals," he said, "thought the situation could be adequately dealt with by administrative Home Rule, or, as others called it, devolution—a policy which would consist in dismissing some of the Orangemen in Dublin Castle and putting Nationalists in their places, transferring to an Irish tribunal in Dublin the management of Irish private bills and objects of that sort. He wished to say to the statesmen who put forward these views that this would afford absolutely no remedy for the state of grievances admitted. He warned the Liberal party, with all respect, to turn a deaf ear to those who were inclined to tempt them away from the straight path into the devious, crooked and unsafe path of repudiation of ancient pledges and the proposal of ridiculous and unmeaning policies such as these."

The words appear somewhat strong, perhaps, to us of the new generation: they were mild indeed for one who had been dissatisfied with Gladstone on the question of a final settlement. His position was well defined in one of the *Freeman* cartoons, in which the reluctant John Bull is asking Pat Redmond how the debt should be paid. "It's an old debt—long overdue, and should therefore be paid at once, not in instalments," is Redmond's reply.

Mill's cartoon was not without point, for Mr. Haldane

thought the best policy would be the placing of responsibility where power really lay, thus leaving the people of Ireland free to educate themselves in the administration of their own affairs, while Mr. Asquith hesitated, from the conviction forced upon anyone acquainted with politics, that nothing but a distinct, definite and irresistible movement of opinion in England could carry through Parliament such a motion, and he was rather inclined to wait, like Rosebery, till the clouds of prejudice passed by.

The leaders of Liberal opinion, however, were for the most part true to their history. Lord—then Mr.—Morley, for example, speaking at Forfar on October 20th, 1905, said :—"Last Session the whole Liberal party in the House of Commons voted in favour of Mr. Redmond's amendment, which stated that the present government in Ireland was in opposition to the will of the Irish people, gave them no voice in the management of their affairs, was extravagantly costly, did not enjoy the confidence of any section of the population, was productive of universal discontent and unrest, and had been proved to be incapable of satisfactorily promoting the material and intellectual progress of the people. Surely, then, it was incredible that a party which supported an indictment so damning should have no policy for dealing with such a state of affairs. I defy the wit of man to give to Ireland, to Irishmen, any effective control or

voice in the management of their own affairs, whether in respect to saving money or anything else, unless there is an executive responsible to a body in which the elective element shall have the decisive voice, whether that body sits on College Green or elsewhere." The following questions were put to Mr. Morley at the meeting, and he returned to them the answers that follow:—"Are you a Home Ruler? I answer: If you mean the creation by Parliament of the local legislature under the paramount authority of the Imperial parliament, yes, I am. Is that what you understand to be the spirit of Gladstonian policy? I say that I can imagine no other intelligible interpretation or application of that spirit."

There was a Gladstonian ring also in the Prime Minister's (Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman) declarations. In fact, he seemed quite as determined as John Redmond that the Irish problem, which had occupied Parliament year in and year out since the days of Grattan, should be solved—but he doubted whether, reviewing the history of the century, it would ever be solved at Westminster. Even good government, he maintained, was no substitute for self-government, and he made it clear that self-government would be the aim of the Liberal party. He did not quite pledge himself to an immediate introduction of a Home Rule Bill; but that this was the end in view was evident from his election

speeches. "I trust," he stated, "that the opportunity of making a great advance on this question of Irish government will not be long delayed and when that opportunity comes, my firm belief is that a greater measure of agreement than hitherto as to the ultimate solution will be found possible, and that a keener appreciation will be felt of the benefits that will flow to the Imperial communities and British people throughout the world, and that Ireland, from being disaffected, impoverished and discouraged, will take its place a strong and harmonious and contented portion of the Empire."

It seemed therefore that John Redmond had at last aroused the attention of the dull but not really ungenerous sense of fair play which lies at the bottom of the British conscience—a conscience which in Irish affairs suffers more from ignorance, apathy and certain touches of occasional panic than from any conscious hostility of spirit. Twenty years of resolute government had cost a seventh of the population, the spirit of coercion was dead, the decks were cleared for action, and all pointed to a confirmation of the Irish leader's motion in the previous February.

The Irish vote, in view of these pledges and sentiments, was accordingly given to the Liberal candidates and not a little conduced to the overwhelming majority with which they were returned in 1906.

The first great measure, however, upon the meeting

of Parliament which claimed the attention of the Irish leader was not an Irish question, save in the sense that it affected the Catholics of England, who are for the most part made up of Irish emigrants. It is more a matter of ecclesiastical history than of personal biography, and though it would be too complicated to enter into the many Education Bills which have called forth his criticism, there are certain general principles characterizing his actions throughout without noting which no estimate of the man would be complete.

In 1902, in 1906, in 1908, his attitude was the same: officially, that of the lay politician; that of the ardent Catholic personally, for John Redmond believes, like Sir Wilfrid Laurier, in an extension of denominational developments as the best safeguard against an infringement of parental control. He is a Home Ruler even here; in the sense that he believes the "Home" has the only claim to rule. But at the same time he will not allow the wrecking of broad political aims by sectarian side issues, and over and over again has he protested against the attempt on the part of Tory Catholics to make use of the Irish party as a political catspaw, and stoutly defended a policy of political independence of all religious creeds.

"I say the National movement is not a Catholic movement," he said on one occasion. "It is not in conflict with the interests of the Catholic religion; God

forbid!—that is the religion of the overwhelming majority of our people. But the National movement is a movement embracing within its fold men of all religions, and those who seek to turn the Nationalist movement into a Catholic movement would be repudiating some of the brightest pages of our national history and forgetting the memory of some of the greatest of our national heroes who professed the newer and the older creed of our country."

I can conceive of no finer declaration from a politician, nor one more calculated to inspire respect and confidence in the event of an Irish parliament, composed of Catholics, being entrusted with power over Protestants. At the same time, as he reminded his hearers at the Coliseum in June, 1908, Catholics have lost nothing in thus trusting to a national instead of a Catholic party. The Catholic schools of England were really the creation of the Nationalist parties of the past, and in that party they would find, he assured them, their best shield and bulwark; only they must allow that party at least political discretion upon questions of ways and means. How necessary this last phrase is anyone familiar with educational controversies will at once realize, for there were some Catholic organs which did not scruple to assert that they could not distinguish between the spirit of Henry VIII. and that of the Irish leader, while one worthy prelate compared him to a

second Clemenceau; and this at a time when almost every action of his was taken with full approbation and knowledge of the English ecclesiastical authorities. The clashes, indeed, that occurred, such as that at Manchester, when the United Irish League and the clergy came into conflict, is another example of the same spirit, the best answer to which is contained in Mr. Dillon's remark, that, once it is allowed that the question is one of policy and of tactics, he was ready to maintain that the trained politicians of the League and of the Irish party are much more likely to be good judges of political tactics than any ecclesiastic in the land.

John Dillon's Catholicism few would impeach, for none worked harder than the Irish party for that cause, and none in that party harder than Dillon. But as John Redmond and many of the Irish party foresaw, the opportunity had been lost in 1902, when separate treatment could easily have been secured by meeting the Nonconformist grievances in a generous spirit. The politicians' hands were forced by the theologians, but their political instincts proved right in the end. Cardinal Vaughan, however, was not unmindful of the Irish labours, and it is a pleasing trait of the Tory prelate to find him trying—in return for the Nationalist help—to start a movement in England to get them a national university.

That the charge of betraying the schools which was

levelled against the party was unfounded needed, however, an official denial in the heated controversy of 1906, and the Irish leader accordingly received the following letter from the Archbishop of Westminster:

"DEAR MR. REDMOND,

"Now that our long struggle for educational equality is momentarily at an end, it is due to you that I should again thank you and your colleagues for the efforts that you have made to rescue our Schools in England and Wales from the jeopardy in which the proposals of the Government had placed them. Knowing as I do the negotiations which have taken place, I am satisfied that you have done your best to deal with a very delicate and critical situation.

"With every good wish for Xmas and the coming year,

"Believe me, yours very sincerely,

"1906. FRANCIS, ABP. OF WESTMINSTER."

This position of independence was again visible in 1908, when again the Irish leader was indefatigable in his efforts on behalf of the Catholic schools, and here not without success, for he obtained almost all the concessions necessary to preserve the religious atmosphere. But he was bitterly opposed to the Catholic

deputation to the House of Lords for the rejection of the Bill, not so much because he himself was in favour of the Bill in all its details, but because, as he reminded the House, he believed it was contrary to the best policy in the long run, namely, that he preferred to trust the Catholic schools to the broad-minded generosity of English democracy than to establish them with the help of such a reactionary body as the House of Lords, whom it would only strengthen for the great constitutional struggle of which he looked upon the rejection of the Education Bill as the first blow.

It was a long-sighted policy, but this was very characteristic of the Irish leader, and sheds a great light, not only upon his statesmanship, but also upon his mental attitude towards Catholicism. His name will be coupled, and deservedly so, with those of Windthorst and Montalembert, but it will not be in the same way. They were political Catholics ; he is a Catholic politician. With him the statesman prevails over the personal believer ; not that he places religion below politics so much as that he recognizes a sort of religion in true politics such as establish a Roman equality of treatment with a consequent atmosphere of mutual respect, in which every creed will flourish according to the value of its own intrinsic merits. And in this he resembles another great Catholic statesman of the Empire, and a personal friend, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the Canadian Premier, who

has had himself to deal with almost the same problem and solved it in exactly the same way.

Thus when, in 1905, a bigoted outcry was raised against Sir Wilfrid Laurier for proposing legislation which would allow Catholic denominational schools to be established in two of the western provinces, pretending that this was abandoning Canada to the Roman Catholics, as a matter of fact, he was merely extending a principle in force for some thirty years, and one upon which the whole religious difficulty had been solved to the satisfaction of both parties. But the prejudice raised in England was so great that Mr. George T. Fulford, one of the Dominion Senators, thus wrote to the *Daily Chronicle* upon the charge of clericalism:

"Sir Wilfrid Laurier was the first great Canadian Catholic who took exception to the interference of the hierarchy in the Dominion politics. He carried his case to Rome and secured a *pronunciamento* from the late Pope practically debarring the Roman hierarchy from taking part in Canadian politics. The charge made now of being a tool of the hierarchy is not only singularly unjust, but can only be made by one who has some other motive in view than that of presenting a true aspect of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's life and character."

The action is significant because of the similarity of the two men Redmond and Laurier and the identity of their creeds, both religious and political. Both are in

a sense Home Rulers and Rome Rulers—but they are examples of that virile lay spirit which, if rare, has distinguished even the most religious, and is certainly worth noting by those who seek to make out that a Catholic Minister must be under the thumb of the priest, and that a Nationalist Premier cannot be an Imperialist as well. Like O'Connell, their motto is, We will take our religion from Rome, but not our politics. But it is often forgotten that it is Rome's motto also, as indeed was shown by the interview which Pius X. gave to the Irish leader in 1905, and which was so resented by Tories and so acclaimed by Nationalists.

John Redmond's own account of the Holy Father's interview was thus described to Mr. Stead:

"I was ushered into his presence," he said, "through stately corridors and splendid antechambers, escorted by Papal guards and chamberlains. But all the pomp and glory stopped when we reached the Pope's room. The door was flung open and instead of finding the Pope on his throne surrounded by ecclesiastics waiting for me to kiss his foot, as some people used to say, I found standing almost on the threshold a dear old priest all alone, the like of whom I have seen in many an Irish village, who would not even let me kiss his ring. He grasped both my hands and then putting one arm round my neck, led me to a chair, where we sat and talked for nearly two hours."

He was introduced at the Vatican by the Marquis MacSweeny, and accompanied by Mgr. Cameron, from Canada, and with the aid of an interpreter had long conversations on the religious, political and industrial movements of Ireland. "I recognize," the Holy Father is reported as saying, "the Irish party as the defenders of the Catholic religion, because it is the national religion and it is the national party, and the struggles of the party by lawful and peaceful means to win political liberty for Ireland, and to obtain the full civic rights of the Irish people denied them at present, have my deep sympathy and blessing."

The report of this interview in all the English Press caused not a little controversy, which, of course, took the colour of the channels through which it passed. The Pope was declared a Home Ruler in some quarters. It was in other quarters, of course, denied that any reference to Home Rule had been made or intended, but one correspondent tried to place upon the visit another political significance by saying that the Pontiff had lectured John Redmond on his disloyalty, expressing his highest appreciation of the cordial reception given to King Edward during his visit to Ireland, and specially recommended to the Irish leader and the Irish nation loyalty to their sovereign and respect for the constituted authority.

The resentment, however, from both parties was equally

irrelevant, as not only had the Holy Father no intention to exert any political influence on English domestic affairs, but probably no Irishman would admit his right, even if it were attempted. The whole visit was public, but hardly official, and it meant no more in the sphere of politics for John Redmond than for King Edward to be received. It was, however, a graceful recognition of Catholic services of the Irishman; and the large portrait which the Pontiff presented to Mr. Redmond was endorsed in the Pope's own hand with the following inscription:—

"To my beloved Son, John Redmond, Leader of the Irish Party in the House of Commons, with a wish that he, together with his equally beloved colleagues, using all legal and peaceful means, may win that liberty which makes for the welfare of the whole country, we impart our Apostolic Benediction with particular affection.

"From the Vatican.

"27 April, 1905,

"PIUS PP."

One cannot help remarking, however, that this Pontifical tribute was fitting to one who had suffered so much from the Catholic hierarchy of his own land during the dark and troublous period of the Split, when to be a Parnellite seemed almost to cease to be a Catholic. A weaker faith would have made a Davitt; a more bigoted one

would have turned him against his leader. The moderate position, which was true to both causes, is one of the great traits of the mental equilibrium of the man, an attitude which he preserved throughout the debates upon the Catholic University Bill.

The New Irish University, which we will treat here, is perhaps the measure with which John Redmond's name will be most associated in history, as it marks the final triumph of a cause which has been fought for ever since, in the days of Grattan's Parliament, Trinity opened its doors though not its endowments to Catholics—an example which was not followed by Oxford and Cambridge for three-quarters of a century. It was a good example of that Fabian perseverance which is characteristic of the creed and of the race, and of John Redmond in particular ; a good lesson, moreover, to those who for years advocated the compromise of rights which, as the Irish leader had throughout maintained, should be granted in full. For it was not as if Catholics had been absolutely excluded from the Universities. They could have compromised their position by entering Trinity College, but they wished to maintain they had a full right to a Catholic University, and they refused to go to one whose religious atmosphere was antagonistic and dangerous to them.

The establishment of three Queen's Colleges, one in Cork, another in Galway and another in Belfast, by Sir

Robert Peel, in 1838, was the first attempt to supply a higher education; but "godless colleges," as they were called from their undenominational character, were no remedy for a people pining for a University with a Catholic atmosphere. In 1873 Gladstone, the Just, as he ought to be termed, took up the case of a Catholic University and failed. Then Fawcett's Act abolished the tests on Catholics and Presbyterians in Trinity. But Newman's attempt, some fifty years ago, was perhaps the nearest approach to what Catholics desired in the way of Catholic University life and atmosphere (the Royal University in 1882 being merely an examining body), and this has been laudably kept up by the Jesuit Fathers and in spirit will no doubt form the nucleus of Catholic higher thought. But the steps of progress were painfully slow, and generation after generation of yearning minds had been doomed to the limitations of ordinary public-school education.

In 1868 Lord Mayo, then Chief Secretary, tried to bring forward a scheme. In 1873 Gladstone tried; in 1885 a Conservative Government tried; in 1889 Mr. Balfour; in 1892 Lord Randolph Churchill; in 1896 Lord Cadogan. In 1899 Mr. Balfour proposed two new Universities, one with a Catholic and one with a Presbyterian atmosphere. In 1901 the Robertson Commission proposed to exclude Trinity from inquiry and constitute a federal teaching University with four colleges, one new

Catholic college to be situated in Dublin. Early in 1904, Lord Dunraven proposed the enlargement of the University of Dublin to include Belfast Queen's College and proposing a new Catholic college for Dublin, each being "autonomous and residential"—and before the end of the session it was announced by the Irish party that they were prepared to accept either of the two last schemes and that the ecclesiastical authorities were likewise satisfied; but even then the Government still hesitated to move, although the Irish leader was continually urging the importance of the question from the point of view of "the brain value of the nation"; each year practically meaning a generation of young men losing the advantages of higher education.

On March 31st, 1908, therefore, the third great measure of the session to remedy a grievance which was certainly second only to Home Rule was introduced by Mr. Birrell, who told the House that he had only accepted the Chief Secretaryship in the hope of being able to solve the problem which Mr. Bryce's retirement had left suspended.

The scheme proposed to deal with the two Universities in the following manner, not in Mr. Bryce's bi-federal scheme. Instead of the existing Trinity College and Royal University, forming one University with two colleges, two new Universities were to be formed—one in Dublin, consisting of the Cork and Galway colleges,

and a new college in Dublin, and the other in Belfast, thus satisfying the grievances of both Presbyterians and Catholics. The governing authorities were to be elective, no religious tests were to be imposed, and powers of affiliation were to be conferred so as to include Maynooth. But great as was the enthusiasm with which the Bill was welcomed (leave being given to introduce the Bill by 317 votes to 24), there were some who looked upon it as likely to perpetuate the religious differences of the country by making the Universities into theological pens.

This was greatly resented by the Irish leader, who pointed out that wherever denominations existed a certain amount of denominationalism must result, for so it was at the Mahomedan University at Khartoum; and a pleasing touch of generosity was seen in the consent of Roman Catholic bishops to allow their positions to depend upon the election of graduates. But the general spirit was as Mr. Redmond had continually urged upon the House—to trust the Irish people; and such in the end was done, with the result, as the Irish leader himself put it, that they have at last a great democratic and national University.

Again, it is pleasing to note the difference between Mr. Redmond and others, like F. H. O'Donnell, on the point of view of education. Both, it is true, are in favour of the National element overshadowing the

sectarian, but from different points of view. The one is from the wish to denominationalize, the other from the wish to protect undenominationalism. Mr. O'Donnell is strongly in favour of mixed education. He quotes instances such as where the Duke of Norfolk and five hundred leading Catholics rejected the idea of a Catholic University when Leo XIII. and Cardinal Manning tried to impose on them such a University under Monsignor Capel. They would have none of it; and the Holy Father decided with them. Of course it was open to Irishmen also to go to the existing Universities, and Trinity could have been "flooded" long ago. But this would have been a compromise, and both from political and religious motives Mr. Redmond was against it in principle, refusing to send his own son where he had been educated himself.

Mr. O'Donnell's History of the Irish Party pleads a cause, but it is none the less interesting for that.

"The English Catholics absolutely refused to attend the Pope's Catholic University in England," he writes. "They maintain their right to attend the national Universities of Britain, and they got the new Catholic University abolished and free access to the national Universities guaranteed by Papal and episcopal decree. The Jesuits and the Benedictines at once set about opening Catholic halls of residence at Oxford and Cambridge, just as they could do in Queen's College,

Cork or Galway; and leading Jesuits openly write that mingling with their fellow-countrymen is most beneficial to the Catholic students of Oxford and Cambridge. . . . No Catholic State in the world supports a Catholic University. The mingling of fellow-countrymen of different religions is more necessary in Ireland than anywhere in the world. That is why the 'Union Policy' is to keep them separated even in the University."

How far the new National University will meet the wants of the new generation; how far Trinity, where there are this year a record number of Catholics, will lose; how far the establishment of two Universities will tend to perpetuate the religious differences and separate the national life of each generation into two theological camps; how far the gradual advance of liberal thought will gradually secularize both, is a question which only the future can solve. One can only say with Mr. Balfour in 1899—"It is not for us to consider how far the undoubtedly conscientious objections of the Roman Catholic population to use the means at their disposal are wise or unwise. This is not our business. What we have to do is to consider what we can do consistently with our conscience to meet their wants." The justice of these wants was admitted; they were unjustly withheld; they have at last been granted; that is, from Mr. Redmond's point of view, the end of the question.

The two attitudes are characteristic of the men. Mr. O'Donnell starts with the intention of repressing the clergy, for he is an open anti-clerical. Mr. Redmond, on the contrary, looks facts in the face and sees that if the clergy will predominate it will be on account of their own individual merits, and simply because there is no body of educated laity fit to take their place; but even if there were, he would oppose the spirit which disqualified a man for science because of the sacredness of his calling and then scoffs at the sanctity of the calling because it does not contribute to the advance of science.

John Redmond sees the practical grievance of a Catholic being deprived of University teaching because of the danger to his faith; he simply wishes to put an end to it. It is not for him to discuss whether the Catholic is right or wrong in his scruple, nor to question the wisdom of a Presbyterian University being established also. But he will not have religious tests imposed to compel belief. He simply takes the denominations as they stand, and gives both full liberty upon the broad national basis. For to foster denominationalism is a much more undenominational act than to suppress it. The priest will, therefore, rule more by reason of his individuality than of his office; more by his learning than his sacred character, as did the Fathers in the schools of Alexandria.

CHAPTER VIII.—*continued*

II.—THE DEVOLUTION SCHEME—THE LAND AND THE LORDS

1905—1910

APART from the Education and the University question, another great matter called for attention in Ireland, namely, the reform of bureaucracy and the substitution of popular government, or Home Rule, and a great advance in that direction was made in the famous Councils Bill.

It was generally thought that its rejection had cost John Redmond his reputation as a statesman. It will probably be found, in the light of future history, to have made it; for he is nothing if not an advocate of full measures, and it was essentially a half measure. But it was dangerous ground, and for a short time after their return to power, the Liberals did not touch the question of Ireland. They merely let matters mature, and John Redmond, while declaring emphatically that nothing short of Home Rule would satisfy the Nationalists, made it plain that they would do everything in reason to help the solution of the problem.

The continuance of the Sir Antony MacDonnell controversy still kept the reform of bureaucracy before the public, but it became more and more evident that Devolution and Home Rule had never been identical; Lord Lansdowne declaring that the Government had never entertained the slightest idea of paving the way for Home Rule, and Mr. Balfour denouncing the preposterous legend which had accused the Unionist party of a crime, as he put it, almost as bad as horse-stealing.

Accordingly on September 23rd, 1907, John Redmond once more put forward the Irish demand, declaring that he did not believe that any settlement of the Irish question could ever come from a parliament that did not understand Irish ideas and generally disregarded Irish public opinion: while as to the scheme of administrative Home Rule, so much in the air, though he himself could only look upon it as a makeshift, when the Ministerial proposals had been drafted they would be submitted to a Convention. There were many, such as Mr. W. O'Brien, who disagreed with this attitude of pressure on the part of the leader, as opposed to a more conciliatory tone; but the memory of the old Parnellite methods was still strong, and perhaps, too, Mr. Redmond was thinking that the period most noted for conciliation, from 1829 to 1869, had likewise been the most barren in legislation. In any case, he warned the Government of the danger of half measures.

The reform of bureaucracy had been a long felt want: it was the fundamental grievance imposed by the Union; and it was against this system that most of the Nationalist attacks had converged under the name of Home Rule, which had only become a Separatist movement when, allied to the religious and agrarian grievances, all constitutional means seemed to have failed. Hence all idea of separation was dead, as Mr. Bryce himself declared when Chief Secretary. "Those in Ireland who desire separation," he said, "are an insignificant minority, for the great bulk of the people have the common sense to know they must continue linked with Great Britain. The idea of a serious movement in favour of separation is a mere chimera." The Home Rule movement had, therefore, become more a set of business propositions to promote economy and efficiency of administration than any attempt to set up a new nation. It was purely and simply a matter of internal reform—a reform which all have admitted necessary—in a system which none have ever endeavoured to defend.

What the faults of this most extravagant government in the world are, is best told in the words of Lord Dunraven, than whom few have stated the case at once with more moderation, accuracy or loyalty. There are, according to him, sixty-seven departments constituting the civil administration of Ireland, through which every project has to struggle until it emerges in London

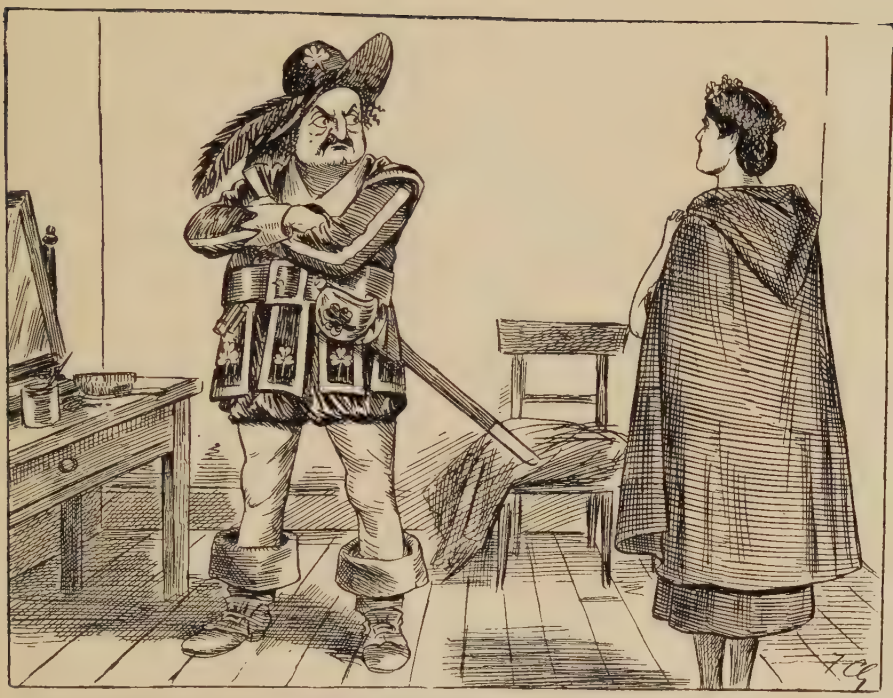
at the mercy of some Treasury clerk, absolutely out of touch with Irish life, and engaged for the most part in compiling folios on "the wages of charwomen and the price of paint," as he humorously puts it.

"It is difficult to describe what is commonly called Castle government," he writes. "It is easier to say what it is not, than what it is. It is not a democratic form of government, for the people have nothing to say to it, either through some representative machinery in Dublin or through their representatives at Westminster. It is not despotism, because the Lord Lieutenant has very little power. It is not exactly an oligarchy, though a small but avaricious section of the community appear to think that the country should be run for their benefit alone. It is a sort, and a very bad sort, of bureaucracy—a government by departments in Ireland, uncontrolled by Parliament, uncontrolled by any public body in Ireland, and subject only to a department in London. It is the most expensive system of government in the world. Head for head, the government of Ireland costs more than the government of any civilized community on the whole face of the earth. Under it there is no security whatever against absolute waste and misapplication of money—no security against the indirect extravagance that arises from money not being spent in the best direction or in the wisest way."

The facts none deny; nor would anyone pretend to

justify the system; like many others, it has become hereditary, or rather exists merely by the force of its own inherent uselessness and unassailability. But as far as public opinion of all classes is concerned, all admitted the time was ripe for a great measure of reform. The only question that arose with the devolutionists was how far it should extend. The proposals of the Irish Reform Association were mainly three: (1) To relieve the Imperial Parliament of the superabundance of business by delegating to an Irish body legislative functions; (2) To secure Irish business being transacted by Irish experts; (3) To employ Irish local talent, knowledge and experience in the financial administration of the country.

The proposals of the Irish Nationalists were that, not by "mending, but by ending," was the question of bureaucracy to be settled. They wanted a bill to do for Irish administration what the Wyndham Act had done for land—that is, effect a complete change of hands by which the great over-Lord England would be none the worse, since it would be rid of work and responsibility, while Ireland, the tenant, so to speak, would thus be enabled to manage her own affairs with more knowledge and interest. The English Liberals were on the whole most favourable to this plan, and an indication of the spirit of conciliation was shown on the appointment of the then Chief Secretary, Mr. Bryce, to fulfil the duties of English Ambassador in America. It



From a drawing by Sir Francis C. Gould, by kind permission of "The Westminster Gazette," where it appeared June 24th, 1907.

A NEW "MAKE-UP."

MR. JOHN REDMOND: "Do I look great and really virile now, Miss Erin?"

MISS ERIN: "Shure, Mr. Redmond, and it's trimblin' in their shoes the toyrants will be when they see you. And you'll be talkin' to thim in the ould tongue."

(At a meeting of the National United Irish League in Dublin, on Thursday, June 20th, 1907, a resolution was passed calling upon the Irish people "to inaugurate, without further delay, a great and really virile movement to win that full national self-government which must be secured before the foundation of Ireland's prosperity in the future can be laid.")

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was rumoured that the Irish leader was himself offered the position thus vacated. At any rate the new Chief Secretary was generally understood to be his nominee. "There are two men whose opinion on the choice would be worth having," wrote Mr. Stead at the beginning of 1907, "Mr. Redmond and Sir Antony MacDonnell. The new Chief Secretary, whoever he may be, ought to regard himself as Mr. Redmond's man. Mr. Redmond himself ought to be Chief Secretary, but as he is precluded from taking the post the Cabinet ought to accept Mr. Redmond's nominee and the new Chief Secretary ought to do what Mr. Redmond tells him. For Mr. Redmond, if Home Rule were granted, would be Prime Minister of Ireland."

The appointment of Mr. Birrell, a great friend of the Irish leader, and one than whom few could imagine a more genial, just and conciliatory spirit to undertake the labours of the reform of Irish government, was the signal for a forward movement, and for months all was expectancy to know what would be the limit and scope of the Liberal party's Irish programme after twenty years of exile, endured mostly for their devotion to the rights of Ireland to political autonomy.

When at last, on May 17th, 1907, the Chief Secretary introduced the long expected measure in the "Irish Councils Bill," the House presented a scene not unlike that when Gladstone proposed an end to "the hundred years

war" of English politics. The measure had been carefully conceived and moulded by the successive efforts of Sir Antony MacDonnell, Mr. Bryce and Mr. Birrell, but in scope it was very modest, too modest, perhaps, to be worthy of a party which could, at one stroke of generous legislation, turn Botha, an armed rebel, into one of the most loyal of Imperial Premiers. It merely proposed a co-ordination of the chief Castle boards, under a popular council, which would be partly elective and partly nominated, and which was to have certain powers of controlling finance and administration. To those who, like John Redmond—that Irish Fabius, as he has been called—looked upon it as the culmination of the hopes and battles of fifteen years, it must have produced a certain feeling of disappointment. It was worthy of a better fate, it is true; much progress might have been made in the years since elapsed; at the same time its history bears a marked resemblance to those many tentative compromises in the way of higher educational facilities and a century of Land Acts, by the constant rejection of which a Catholic University and a peasant proprietary had been won.

The House of Commons would be in no way affected by it, as the Chief Secretary explained; but its object was of supreme importance as associating the sentiment of the Irish people with the conduct of purely Irish affairs. If the plan were successful, it could be used as

an argument for Home Rule; if not, an argument against it. In any case, it would be giving the question a fair trial, and, as he went on to point out, it would be shocking for anyone to lay down that the Irish were to be denied the opportunity of showing themselves fit for self-government, on the ground that, should they prove their fitness for it, the British people might some day grant them Home Rule.

The House expected an immediate eulogy of the concession from the Irish leader. John Redmond was perfectly calm: though it could be seen, spoke with obvious emotion. He neither praised nor blamed: neither accepted nor rejected. But in this attitude he was never more himself. He said he had never addressed the House under a heavier sense of responsibility—that no one in his position could take upon himself the onus of refusing any measure, however small, that would remove even one Irish grievance; but, in any case, the Bill should have to await the decision of the National Convention. Its subsequent rejection on the leader's own motion was a tragic end. It was said that he had executed a *volte-face*: and that a little more firmness would have made him a statesman. On the contrary, the whole incident stamped him as one. In the first place, six months before, he had almost foretold his action. "When the scheme is produced it will be anxiously and carefully examined," he had said. "It will

be submitted to the judgment of the Irish people, and no decision will be come to, whether by me or by the Irish party, until the whole question has been submitted to a National Convention. When the hour of that Convention comes, any influence which I possess with my fellow countrymen will be used to induce them to reject any proposal, no matter how plausible, which in my judgment may be calculated to injure the prestige of the Irish party, and disrupt the national movement, because my first and my greatest policy, which overshadows everything else, is to preserve a united National party in Parliament, and a united powerful organization in Ireland, until we achieve the full measure to which we are entitled."

In the second place, nothing could be a better refutation of personal autocracy than this attitude, which could not by any distortion be looked upon as the pronouncement of a "boss." But not only does it show the representative character of the party and its dependence on the voice of the nation, but it also shows the independence of that nation. You cannot square Redmond, simply because Redmond is the mouthpiece, not the ruler, of Ireland. Parnell would have spoken for the nation; Redmond speaks by the nation. He was not committed to the Bill; he simply executed a commission; he had even passed no judgment on it. He had but laid the Bill before the Convention like an ambassador

without in any way coming between the delegates and their decision.

It was not, therefore, that he did not see the great advance which such a scheme would mean to the cause of Irish autonomy, so much as the fact that he considered it a substitutive measure even in the minds of many who hitherto had been whole-hearted Home Rulers. But for the Devolutionists, he contended, a Home Rule Bill would have been proposed instead of the Councils Bill. Nor was it that he was averse to compromise; for as a practical politician he could not be opposed to considering any scheme on its merits; but merits it must have, and looking at the Bill in detail, he thought he discovered many things that might lead to antagonism to the party. "By the constitution of this Council it is extremely doubtful to my mind," he said, "whether the real feeling of the overwhelming mass of the Irish people would be truly reflected in a workable majority on the Council, and there would be the greatest possible danger that the Council would constitute a sort of rival body to the Irish Nationalist party, which, as I have said, I believe to be the greatest weapon, with an organized country behind it, which Ireland has in her possession."

This latter view was probably stronger than any other for its rejection. A superficial critic would impute it to jealousy; a business man alone could understand the

hopeless complication that would arise in having two "representative" bodies claiming to speak for the same firm; and John Redmond, though in no sense a business man, has all those organizing instincts which in another sphere would have made him one. It was the practised politician and organizer who spoke. He saw in the Bill, not only a wedge placed between the members of Parliament and the nation, but a policy which would only make the unanimity of the Irish demand still more difficult.

The wisdom of the immediate rejection of the Bill is, of course, open to criticism. The suggestion of Mr. F. H. O'Donnell that its rejection was due to the aversion of the clergy to lay control in matters of education may not be without foundation. That it would have been easy, as Mr. O'Brien pointed out, to propose a showier scheme certain of rejection is also true; but how far Lord Dunraven was right in maintaining "that if the Bill be lost by its summary rejection by the Convention, Ireland would receive a heavier blow from her own hands than the ingenuity of her enemies could have possibly devised," must be judged by subsequent events. The great fact remains that it was unanimously rejected as insufficient even by some of its warmest admirers. "The Irish people," wrote Mr. O'Brien in the case he made out for Devolution as a first step to Home Rule, "were the sovereign judges of life and death of the Bill. It was

niggardly enough to be a caricature and an outrage if it were really set up as a full satisfaction of the national demand for self-government. Those who most deplore the action, however, for there was no deliberation, will find elements of grandeur in the unworldliness with which thousands of excellent Irishmen threw all chance of self-government to the winds, under the misunderstanding that they would be otherwise compromising the national demand for complete government of purely domestic affairs by an Irish executive reponsible to an Irish government, such as are scattered by dozens over every part of the Empire."

For weeks and months Mr. Redmond's attitude was the subject of criticism. In his own party, even, it produced no little dissension and no few secessions, and was the first rift in the lute. This disagreement probably formed the nucleus of the new party of ten which was later to be returned under the leadership of Mr. W. O'Brien. But by the first months of 1908 the points of reunion had been settled and the party plunged into the fray with renewed vigour, on the old Parnellite principle, of forcing, rather than kissing, the hands of the Government. And the further progress of the land question and the settlement of the University question are a testimony to its efficacy. As to the "folly" of the rejection, Mr. Redmond made his apology in Dublin in the September following. He said:

"Now, we did our utmost to extend that Bill and make it worth acceptance, at any rate as an instalment; but when we came to the point when we found we could get them to go no further in the direction we wanted, we felt it our duty to allow the Bill to be introduced and to let the Irish people see exactly how they stood with reference to this Government. Its production and its fate will prove, in my opinion, probably a blessing in disguise. Certainly the fate of that great measure has shown the Government the impossibility of satisfying Ireland with anything short of real Home Rule, and it has also made this certain, that Home Rule and not Devolution will be the Irish policy put before the electors at the next General Election. If that Bill had been accepted here as an instalment, and if it had passed, as it would have passed, the House of Commons, it most undoubtedly would have been rejected by the House of Lords, and then it—that is, the Irish Councils Bill—would have definitely passed into the programme of the Liberal party as their Irish policy, whereas now, after what has happened, Home Rule, and whole Home Rule, must be the policy of the Liberal party before the next General Election."

Certainly as far as the Prime Minister was concerned the prognostication was correct. "Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was by far the most faithful of the old Liberals," as T. P. O'Connor remarks in a sketch of

the career of that statesman, "and the Irish Nationalists had an affection for him such as they probably never felt for any other Prime Minister before," but "The rejection of the Councils Bill produced no estrangement between them and C.-B. Indeed, immediately after the return from the fateful Convention in Dublin, the Irish leaders who had taken part in the Conference with regard to the Bill of the Government were agreeably surprised by the cordiality with which C.-B. received them. There was no trace of bitterness, partly, doubtless, because C.-B. and the Irishmen had been united in pressing in vain on the Cabinet—or on a section of the Cabinet—the amendments in the measure which might have secured its acceptance." In fact, it appears that one of the Prime Minister's last acts in the House of Commons, the support he gave to a motion in favour of Home Rule, was a confirmation of the verdict of the Convention.

It was at first suggested that the Prime Minister should propose this Home Rule resolution. As the day approached letters passed continually between the Premier and the Irish leader, and it was settled that the latter should propose the resolution, and that the former should wind up the debate with a strong speech in its support. As T. P. O'Connor goes on to say, referring to Sir H. Campell-Bannerman:

"This was probably one of the last things he attended

to in Parliament. On February 13th he was down at the House for a short while; the Irish motion was to take place the next week. One of the last men to whom he spoke was Mr. Redmond, making the final arrangements which death alone prevented from completion."

The final triumph, however, of the policy of John Redmond and the National Convention came when on the eve of the election campaign, on December 17th, Mr. Asquith, whose succession to Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman had been looked upon rather with suspicion by the Nationalists, sounded the death knell of Devolution, as Mr. T. P. O'Connor put it, by an open avowal of the full Gladstonian policy, and the position lost by the rejection of the Home Rule Bill of 1893 was regained in 1909.

The famous Albert Hall pledge was as follows:

"Speaking on behalf of the Government, in March of last year, a week before my accession to the office of Prime Minister, I described Ireland as the one undeniable failure of British statesmanship (cheers). I repeat here to-night what I said then, speaking on behalf of my colleagues, and I believe of my party, that the solution of the problem can be found only in one way (cries of "Home Rule" and loud cheers), by a policy which, while explicitly safeguarding the supremacy and indefeasible authority of the Imperial Parliament, will set up in Ireland a system of full self-government

(loud cheers) in regard to purely Irish affairs (cheers). There is not, and there cannot be, any question of separation (more cheers); there is not, and there cannot be, any question of rival or competing supremacies, but, subject to those conditions, that is the Liberal policy (Cheers)."

Once more the Liberal party had returned to its traditions; but if it had, and if it had abandoned the policy of half measures, Roseberyite and Devolutionist, it is due almost entirely to the Parnellite policy of John Redmond.

All this while, though apparently on the very eve of Home Rule, the party and the policy had been subjected to the most bitter criticism in Ireland. The charges, which, if true, would have justified the driving of every member not only from his seat, but from Ireland, as Mr. Dillon maintained, were sufficiently met by his statement: "The policy of Mr. Redmond and the Irish party during the last two years has been abundantly justified by the position Home Rule occupies at the present moment." Nevertheless, Mr. Redmond seemed called upon to give an account of his stewardship, which he accordingly did to his constituents at Waterford. He reminded them of the programme he had sketched out four years previously. He had spoken of the education question: the party had given them a great Irish national democratic

University. He had spoken of the land question: the principle of compulsory purchase had been extended to nine counties, and even beyond, wherever congestion existed, while the restoration of the evicted tenants which had also been arranged for, should have taken place in 1903 had they had their way.

The labouring classes, who had been rather overlooked during the past twenty-five years, owing to the leading position which the farmers' interests had occupied, had been advanced four and a half millions, a sum which was building some fifty thousand decent labourers' cottages, to take the place of the old dilapidated hovels, while town tenants were protected for the improvements on their premises in a way unknown in any of the towns of England, Scotland and Wales. True, it was not a perfect Bill, but he maintained it had established a principle—and that principle the party intended to extend to every township in Ireland; while they had managed to get a fund of £180,000, to aid local authorities in Ireland in housing the poor, and thus by the giving of decent, proper comforts to the poor, raise them from that condition of squalor which was the real root of all social and moral degradation that existed in overcrowded tenements. Again, the party had succeeded in getting all the agricultural land exempted from Budget taxes, that all the money raised in Ireland on such land as has increased in value by the

action of the community should go to the local authorities in Ireland and be used in the interests of the working classes.

All these he ventured to lay before them as the work of four years, and if he were accused of having failed to obtain Home Rule, while he had refused the Councils Bill, it was only, he explained, because if that Bill had not been rejected by the House of Lords, it would, at any rate for their lifetime, have become the high-water mark of Liberal efforts.

It is hardly fitting for me to enter into the personal contest which took place between Mr. Healy and Mr. Redmond during the election campaign of 1910: but one can hardly pass over the words which fell from the leader's lips during the fight. "Public life in this country is hard owing to such incidents as these," he said, "and it is bitter meed to be subjected to attacks of this kind. My power for good has been small; my abilities are limited. God knows there is no one who is more conscious of his own shortcomings than I am of mine, but I know that my motives have been sound and honest. I know I have given my best to the service of the people of Ireland. When you are tired of me, when my colleagues in the House of Commons are tired of me, I am quite ready to-morrow to step down and out, and if and when that day comes I will humbly and loyally do my best to support those who may take

my place. But never so long as I live will I allow myself to be driven out by calumny and abuse." The words were sincere, for if ever there was a man who deserved loyalty, it is the one who learned to rule by having learnt to serve: and if there should ever be a new split there is no doubt that the recollection of those hard days spent in toil for the resurrection of the Parnellite policy will not be forgotten.

But one cannot help regretting that upon the very eve of the triumph that was awaiting that policy in Westminster there should have arisen a recurrence of that spirit which was worthy of the worst days of the split. It is the greater pity because, as Mr. Redmond once said at a St. Patrick's Day banquet, "the Irish leader is what the loyalty of his followers makes him," and there is probably no one who would more appreciate the value of such services as those of Mr. Healy and Mr. O'Brien in continual attendance at Westminster if they would give them in the way in which John Dillon—one of Mr. Redmond's bitterest opponents for ten years—has given his. In fact, a certain Nemesis seems to attend the Irish leaders. O'Connell was supplanted by the Young Irelanders, Butt was superseded, Parnell hounded to death —and quite apart from the point of view of personal merits, it must always be remembered that it takes often a full decade to make a leader who can command the

ear and the respect of the House. "The position to which I was elected," Mr. Redmond continued, sketching out the future policy of the party, "was one of great difficulty at any time, but at the time I was put into it the difficulties were enormous and unprecedented. So far as the Parnell split is concerned, I think I have succeeded. I have endeavoured to be patient under unjust and ungenerous criticism. I have endeavoured to extend toleration to every man. . . I did not hesitate to risk my position and my popularity with my countrymen and my colleagues in order to avoid the necessity of extreme action against men who were mutineers" —then amidst huge applause, the audience rising to their feet and cheering, he announced the limits of patience—"Whether you elect men hostile to the party or whether you do not, you will have in the next Parliament a party which if it is not eighty-six—I care not whether it is seventy-six or sixty-six—will be a party absolutely united, made up of men who are animated by a spirit of comradeship and trust."

Nor was the criticism of the party confined to the eader or his methods. The very existence of "Parliamentarians" is now being undermined by the new Sinn Fein movement—an effort to abandon the methods of Parliamentary tactics on the very eve of victory—of which more later.

The chief point significant of the Irish leader's attitude

at the end of the session of 1909, however, was the Budget and the veto of the House of Lords. Ireland did not like the Budget, it is true; but as a wit remarked, "Ireland was not going to sell Home Rule for a glass of whisky." The remark at first seems superficial, but it is deeper than it appears, for Ireland could never expect to fight the House of Lords on Home Rule alone, and that House was the only obstacle to Home Rule. "The issue is Home Rule for England," as John Redmond remarked at Manchester. Ireland is, therefore, taking part in one of the most important democratic struggles through which the English Constitution has had to pass, to say nothing of helping in the suppression of a body who for one hundred years had steadily opposed the progress of the democracy of both countries.

The Lords had opposed the extension of the franchise, the ballot, and three times they had refused Catholic Emancipation till it was forced upon them by the Duke of Wellington as the only alternative to civil war. They had been responsible for every drop of blood shed in the terrible land war by delaying, refusing or distorting every generous measure sent up by the Commons. They, and they alone—not the people of England—were really hostile to Irish self-government, as Mr. Redmond maintained and the abolition or the limitation of the veto of the

House of Lords meant Home Rule for Ireland. It was hardly to be expected that England should fight the Lords entirely upon an Irish question—thus shelving all British questions for several sessions, but once the struggle had begun, there was hardly anything more important than that Ireland should take her part. "Believe me," he continued, "the moment the veto of the Lords is abolished or limited, the Home Rule question will undergo an entire change—instead of being a matter of great controversy, it will then be a matter of simply our sitting down quietly and settling the details of the measure, which will give Ireland full control of all purely Irish affairs, and at the same time will completely safeguard all Imperial interests in this country. *To talk about Ireland separating from the Empire is the most utter nonsense. We are not asking for separation.*"

Throughout, it seems as if it is not only the Irishman who speaks, but also the English subject—the "House of Commons man," to use Mr. Balfour's expression. Mr. Redmond looks upon the Lords much in the same way as the Long Parliament looked upon the Royal prerogative—a relic of mediævalism forfeited by its use in a reactionary and purely arbitrary interest. True, he fights for Ireland; but his stand is for Ireland through democracy; and the day will come when it will be recognized, as Lecky maintained, that no single element

in the House of Commons has been more fruitful in influencing the progress of English democracy than the Irish party.

John Redmond's message on the Lords is, therefore, war—but only as the last struggle necessary to establish perpetual peace between the two countries. He is fighting a class to defend an Empire, and the great speech at Manchester presented an olive branch from Ireland to the English electorate, such as probably finds no parallel either in spirit or circumstance in all Irish history. Speaking of the separation scare, he said, "Now, I say to those men who so distrust us—'Very well, take with these Home Rule measures any guarantees that you like to prevent the possibility of Ireland immediately raising an army to invade England, to prevent the possibility of Ireland immediately raising a fleet of Dreadnoughts to sink the British Navy.' Let them take any guarantees they like to prevent Ireland entering the field of foreign diplomacy so that it will be impossible for her to invite the German Emperor to come over and make a naval base of Belfast Lough. I say to the English democracy in all seriousness, what we want is peace between the two countries. We have none of those heroic ambitions and hare-brained ideas. Our ideas and our ambitions are humbler. We simply want the people to turn the energies and abilities which are to-day dissipated in

this horrible racial contest between England and Ireland to the prosaic work of advancing the material and moral and educational elevation of our own people at home. We know that it cannot be done by outsiders. The whole history of the Empire shows the same in every part of the world. We simply ask for permission quietly to attend to our own business in our own way (cheers). We say, 'Let there be peace' (hear, hear). I declare we want an end to this war. We want a treaty of peace like that treaty of peace which was made by England to Botha and De Wet at Vereeniging, and I say with all sincerity to the English people, all we want under the name of Home Rule is as much freedom in purely Irish affairs as they gave the other day in purely Transvaal affairs to the Boers (cheers). That concession to the Transvaal turned the Boers from bitter enemies into fast friends, and, we say, we in Ireland are prepared to welcome and accept, and to work in precisely the same spirit as the Boers, the concession of Home Rule when it comes to us (cheers). That is the supreme issue for Irishmen in Great Britain at this election. You never—nor your fathers before you—never had such a chance as you have now of furthering the cause of Home Rule for Ireland."

CHAPTER IX

THE MAN

"NOW that it is certain that the balance of power in the new Parliament will be in the hands of Mr. John Redmond and his followers, it may be as well for Englishmen to study the remarkable utterances of that not very remarkable man." Such was the opening paragraph of an *Evening News* leader (Jan. 25, 1910) entitled "The two Mr. Redmonds." To those who know him both politically and socially such phrases only provoke a smile, for no one is a more consistent thinker than John Redmond. To the writer of the article John Redmond typified "Irish blarney"; in point of fact, there are very few Irishmen who have more of the serious business instincts of the Englishman than Mr. Redmond. In spite of the many garbled quotations that are circulated, to anyone who has read his speeches there is far more redundancy in them than contradiction. Politically, at least, there is only one John Redmond, but if there are two, the other *ego* is to be found in that John Redmond *intime* who is almost as hidden and unknown, and in some respects more so

Photo by] [*London Stereoscopic Co.*

JOHN REDMOND

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than was the inner Charles Stewart Parnell. This is the real John Redmond, and in him is to be found the explanation of the other. He tells a story of how Parne was once asked what he thought of one of the newly elected members of his party.

"Oh," replied the chief, "a most charming fellow. I dined with him the other day at his house. He's a first-rate musician, a good host and a splendid dancer."

"Quite a valuable addition to the party," was a friend's reply.

Parnell's manner instantly changed from eulogy to cold disdain, and the genial Parnell became the cynical chief, as with a shrug of his shoulders he answered—

"Oh, politically the fellow's an ass!"

I have always thought that the story would be more characteristic of Redmond himself, for no one, I think, understands better than he the exact parliamentary value of a man, and none is more willing to distinguish the genial, social friend from the political opponent. It is related of Gladstone that he returned from the House after the defeat of the Home Rule Bill entirely immersed in the occupation of counting the passing omnibuses. John Redmond has the same power of taking his mind off politics. Once he leaves the House, he leaves its quarrels and casts aside its atmosphere like a cloak. You could hardly even tell he was a politician at all. When, for instance, Balfour welcomed him back to

the House in the lobby after Redmond's term of imprisonment, the meeting between the two was almost cordial. Mr. Balfour courteously inquired after the other's health. The young member as courteously thanked him for the inquiry, and assured him that not only had "gaol life" left his health unimpaired, but it had not even changed his political opinions, and that he was perfectly prepared to repeat the words—even with the same result. The smile of affability, however, stopped at the Bar of the House.

This distinction between social and political life is probably the reason why, to the general reader, there is no more private public man, so to speak, than Mr. Redmond. He is an unknown quantity, even to his colleagues, and he loves to find rest in the seclusion of home life. He does not, for example, entertain largely or go about the centre of a large professional and social *entourage* like the great Liberator, leaving hundreds of stories and *bons mots* and witticisms in his train. On the contrary, he rarely exerts himself to be brilliant socially, merely for brilliancy's sake. The biographer will have to search almost in vain, as in the case of Parnell, for those personal touches that reveal the actual inner man. He behaves for the most part rather like a foreign ambassador: he does not breathe his secret even "to his own hat," and probably he will always remain something of an enigma unless

he should one day choose to tell his own story in an autobiography. There are not wanting, however, a thousand sidelights upon his character which help one to an estimate of the complete man.

As with Parnell, so with Redmond, the politician is the man. But whereas Parnell gained, Redmond lost by politics. Parnell would have remained, as his first speech stamped him, a nonentity: Redmond laid aside unused great social and professional qualities to become the politician. It would form an interesting speculation to ask oneself how his undoubted ability would have developed in a less severe school than that of Irish politics. Had he followed the traditions of the maternal branch of the family, he might have become a soldier, like General Hoey, his grandfather. That stern and commanding presence of his: that silence and seriousness: that power of tactics would no doubt have placed him beside that other great Irishman, the late Sir William Butler; for the two have often been compared as personalities, both being broad-minded Catholics, ardent patriots and lovers of the Empire. But his father's influence seems to have prevailed, and he became, therefore, cut out for one of the rhetorical or pleading professions. In common with most Irish boys, he thought at one time that he had a religious vocation, and had he followed it he would undoubtedly have become an Irish Jesuit, for he has the greatest love of the Jesuit fathers—to whom, as he says,

both his father, himself and his son owe everything. That earnestness of appeal, that almost blind devotion to a leader and a cause, that clearness of judgment and ardour of heart, would probably have made its mark in any Catholic pulpit, while his courteousness of manner and grave tolerance would not have ill suited the purple of an Irish Cardinal.

The second of the great pleading professions was at first expected to be his career. It is now many years since he withdrew his wig and gown from the library of the Four Courts in Dublin; but the long rows of dusty Statutes that adorn his humble library show that he intended seriously practising at one time. For many years, indeed, he did practise, but for the most part politics seem to have absorbed him. He left Trinity before he had taken his degree to devote himself to parliamentary work, and he left Dublin before he had finished his full law course. He had been round the world before he was finally called to the English Bar at Gray's Inn. During those early years, between 1887 and 1893, the briefs, it may be mentioned, came in pretty regularly, and he appeared as counsel in one notable case in which Messrs. Dillon and O'Brien were prosecuted by the Government for conspiracy. But the duties of championing Parnell which fell upon him, followed by the leadership of the Independents, after the chief's death, compelled him to make a choice between the

pleasant duties of a remunerative career and the—shall I call it thankless?—task of politics. But if he chose the latter as a life work, it was not because he was a man of affluent means. It was rather because of a fervour for practical patriotism, which in him amounted almost to a religion; and it is in this that is to be found the key to all his life. He was a patriot before he was a politician: he will always be a politician, because he will always be a patriot.

Politics and religion with John Redmond are as one, knit strong and welded together. That is to say, he believes that if religion is to mean anything more than a mere useless theological astronomy to mankind it ought to be a motive force for the betterment of the conditions in which men have to live. There can be no more sacred thing than the love of one's country, and Nationalism is to him the breaking down of those obstacles which stand in the way of the natural development of a race according to its own special needs and genius. As in religion, so in politics. He believes that development must be autonomous, and he as fiercely resents coercion as the freedom-loving modern resents the ancient tortures of the Inquisition. Races do not exist for an empire, but an empire for races. Unity must be synonymous with mutual protection, not with alien possession. And if a reason is sought for that whole-hearted business regularity with which he

devotes almost every hour to politics, it will be found, not in a mere love of notoriety—surely the most unreliable stocks that ever man invested in!—but in a profound and unshakable conviction that, in serving his country he is fulfilling the highest work a man can perform. As in many an Irish cottage the picture of Robert Emmet forms the companion to that of the Blessed Virgin on the domestic mantelpiece, so in the heart of the Irish leader religion and politics are the twin principles that rule his life.

In this religious earnestness, moreover, is to be found the genesis of those occasional disloyal sentiments of his, those phrases which so offend pious Tory ears. As a matter of fact, he is no disloyalist, but, at the same time, his loyalty is not of the "Mafeking" order. "Anything but unqualified loyalty," he wrote upon the Queen's visit to Dublin, "would be an insult—anything else would be a lie." And if it is true that on April 13th, 1905—to again quote the same *Evening News* article—John Redmond said that: "If he believed there was the smallest reasonable chance of success he would have no hesitation in advising his fellow-countrymen to arm and overthrow the present system by armed revolt," it simply means that he is not one of those who hold that all the liberties in the world are not worth the shedding of a single drop of blood! Could a man conscious of his country's wrongs say less? But these

are sentiments which are generally modified by the next sentence, and are rather a literary way of emphasizing the seriousness of the wrong than an actual incitement to revolt. In fact, they are often the rhetorical manner of expressing the futility of arms; but—let them stand by themselves—no English patriot could say less were the positions reversed. Such "indiscretions" must not be lightly passed over; but they must be read objectively. And perhaps no better apology could be cited for them than that which Mr. Gladstone himself made for the so-called general "indiscretions" of Irish politicians:

"I am aware it may be truly said there was a time when the grievous recollections and traditions of Ireland, the dreadful sufferings and the apparent hopelessness of obtaining from Parliament any consideration for the capital desires of Ireland *did* sway some men off the precise line of absolute wisdom. And this led some of them to use, from time to time, expressions which I, for one, have never thought it necessary to treat as involving moral delinquency, and for which I have found ample explanation in the conditions and the circumstances under which they spoke, and which stand in most favourable comparison with the means which had been habitually employed by the overpowering might of England and by the ascendency party in Ireland." "But," he goes on to note, "no more language of disaffection towards this country has been used since

the door of Hope was opened." The admission is both just and generous, and though it hardly applies to John Redmond, it certainly exhibits an attitude of mind which is worthy of imitation: for it will be found that there are few expressions of the Irish leader which have not some objective justification and without which the whole-hearted sincerity of the man would be completely lost in the picture.

Perhaps, however, the ardour of his patriotism is due to the literary development of his character, for as he was a patriot before a politician, so he was a poet before he was a patriot. Perhaps some future biographer may give to the world the contents of those well-filled pencilled notebooks of University days, but politics are hardly a congenial school for the Muses, and the hopes of his old poetry master at Clongowes have, at least in this direction, been quite unrealized, though nothing has been more potent as an inspiration. Redmond is probably one of the only men from whom the House will stand poetry. Unlike Parnell, who only quoted a verse once—from one of Moore's "Melodies," the line, in reference to Ireland, "First flower of the earth and first gem of the sea"—and then used the word "jewel" for "gem"!—he is always quoting lines from Shakespeare, as, for example, in the peroration to his famous Home Rule speech, where he compared the Bill to the toad which, "ugly and venomous, wears

yet a precious jewel in his head." On one occasion he not only surprised the House by reciting a whole stanza of "Hiawatha," but he was himself surprised that the House stood it: they would have stood it from very few!

The reason, of course, is that modern oratory is invariably unemotional, and Professor Bell's old pupil has something of the old school about him, which has earned for him the title of "the last of the parliamentary orators of the line of Burke." But even he has not escaped the cynical influence of the times, and his latter-day speeches read very differently to those with which he was wont so greatly to move his Australian and New York audiences thirty years ago. Yet deep in his mind there still lingers the remembrance of those numberless passages from Shelley and Byron and Wordsworth upon which his soul browsed in the days of his youth. And often when talking to this new generation he notes with regret, not to say bitterness, the gradual abandonment of poetry as a factor in education—an element far more effective in the building up of character than mathematics, and he would himself probably find it far easier to turn out a very readable volume of English verse than pass the "Little Go," were he called upon to do so.

He is above all a man of soul: he is a Celt in mind. The English spirit is too cold and commercial for him.

and it is probably for this reason that he displays such an uncompromising, whole-hearted hostility to the Anglicizing of Irish thought. He is an enthusiastic Gaelic Leaguer. His own children were taught Irish. He is a keen admirer of Irish art, and a jealous upholder of the distinctiveness of Irish genius. But it is only because he believes there is objective value in the racial differences.

He has not that extreme anti-English bitterness which characterizes some Irishmen, probably for the same reason in literature as in politics, that, as the Irish sword has built the Empire, so in like manner Irish pens have taken their full share in the erection of that proud empire of thought which is known as English literature. He believes in Irish literature, but he is not of that movement which would seek to disown the tongue of Swift, O'Connell and Burke. He is not one of those who, to use a Hibernianism, believe that Ireland's future is behind her. The revival of Irish as a spoken language he is in agreement with, heart and soul. In the "Intermediate" examinations he got it placed upon a level with the classics, but he would be one of the staunchest opponents of any attempt to substitute it for the classics, much less to extinguish root and branch the hated Saxon tongue in Ireland. His mind is progressive, not retrospective, and if he returns to past Irish history it is only that none of the

gems of Irish genius should be lost in Ireland's contribution towards modern art and modern thought in the future.

If, therefore, he is opposed to the "Anglicizing" influences at work in Dublin and other cities, it is because he recognizes that it is changing the whole character of the Irish race. He sees in the spirit of the "musical comedy" and the "variety stage" symbols of a vulgarity and lack of artistic sense which is swiftly killing the soul of the nation by extinguishing all love of country and history. An Irish family who prefer to sing the latest English pantomime inanities in the drawing-room to the glorious Irish Melodies of Moore, is to him the signal of that insidious advance of decadence against which, as one of the older men, his soul revolts, and this is only one of the reasons he thinks nothing but a native parliament and residential aristocracy can make Dublin and Ireland what it was before the Union, a centre of literary thought and culture.

Here, too, his hatred of England is objective and not personal. England, he holds, has in many respects inferior manners and ideas. He denounces them. But England has also great leaders and strong men, and these he reverences, even as he reveres the idols of England's past. For example, there are few Irishmen living who possess a greater devotion to Shakespeare

than John Redmond. But he has a tremendous pride of race, and he feels that amid all the sneers cast at Ireland, it is the duty of Irishmen to let the merits of their race shine forth in every sphere of English life, and that is why it is with feelings of despair he sees the abandonment of all those native enthusiasms which formed the superiority of so many Irish statesmen, poets and soldiers in the past.

And no better example could be given of that Irish capacity when placed on the level of a common public life and literature than the enthusiasm with which Oxford acclaimed him at the height of his reputation. For at the modern University they regarded him much in the same way as the dons of the eighteenth century would have looked upon another Irishman, Edmund Burke, the greatest of the orators of their day.

It was said that many of the academic critics were prepared to question his parliamentary reputation. John Redmond evidently rose to the occasion, for on that auspicious visit to Oxford he by far excelled his usual House of Commons manner. Indeed "The Champion of Ireland, in good times and in bad," as he was called, created a perfect furore even among the most cynical. There were storms of applause before he had spoken a single word, and when the result of the debate at the Union was announced the enthusiasm was such as

had never been seen before, and Tory Oxford was filled with Home Rule converts!

"It was a memorable debate," wrote the *Oxford Magazine*, for June, 1907. "Mr. Redmond's speech was thrilling, and the result of the division sensational. We had prophesied that Mr. Redmond would win, but we had thought of a majority nearer 33 than 133: such a majority is the highest compliment that could possibly be paid to Mr. Redmond. It is doubtful if the Union has ever heard or ever will hear again a speech which will have such influence on its hearers."

A rather good estimate from the pen of Mr. W. M. Crook—who, as we have seen, had already met him in Dublin when they were law students together at the Inns—may be included as coming from another source, and discounting what *Punch* calls "my Uncleism."

"One of the qualities," he wrote, "which, I think, has brought Mr. Redmond to his present position is the fact that he is a loyal friend. One day, during the General Election of 1886, I went into the Irish headquarters in London, then located in Palace Chambers, Westminster Bridge Road, to see Mr. J. T Clancy about a meeting I was about to address that evening. John Redmond was there. 'Look here,' he said to me, 'you are the very man I want. George Russell has a meeting this evening at Fulham. Very reluctantly I was compelled to fight against him last year. I want to do everything I can

to help him to get in this year. It is quite impossible for me to speak for him to-night. You have only one meeting and I want you to go.'

"I went. Mr. Russell, whom I did not then know, was unable through indisposition to be present. His place was taken by his father, a noble specimen of the stately, courteous English aristocrat. As I chatted to that splendid old man, the soul of chivalry and honour, I realized why John Redmond was so anxious for the son's success. The Irish leader is a supreme judge of men.

"John Redmond's capacity for loyalty to his friends is second only to his loyalty to his country. An incident that occurred last session illustrates both characteristics. It was a very busy session for the Irish Party; four days a week the Irish leader was in the House for twelve hours a day, from noon till midnight. Naturally his Wednesday evenings were therefore precious. One of the Irish organizations in the metropolis had asked me to lecture for them, and they asked John Redmond to preside. No other leader of the party in the House of Commons worked so hard: none other would have come. But John Redmond came.

"The subject was Ireland's contribution to civilization. Mr. Redmond, who seemed rather wearied, spoke only a few minutes. But in that brief space he revealed his passionate admiration for the great dead past of the

race of which he was the world-wide figure-head, the uncrowned king.

"There is no mere apology, only burning pride, in what John Redmond had to say of the civilizing movement which covered Western Europe with seats of learning and which has bequeathed to after generations artistic monuments like the matchless Book of Kells. He closed with a few words of hearty appreciation for the work the young men are doing in the Party league. For John Redmond always appeals to young men, alike to the cultured youth of Oxford and the more fiery spirits of Mayo or Chicago.

"When I first met Mr. Redmond" (the fact is worth noting, by the way) "I was more or less of a Separatist. He made me an Imperialist. I do not use the word to designate an admirer of the gorgeous orientalism of Benjamin Disraeli, nor yet a follower of the narrowly insular policy of an uneducated Birmingham tradesman. John Redmond knew the Empire. His wife was an Australian, and even when I first met him he had been round the world. The great free communities, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and even the United States, were to him in large part Irish estates. Irish blood and Irish brains had helped them to freedom and to prosperity. It was a new point of view to us. I do not speak with authority, but I do say with some confidence that never, while John Redmond is leader,

will the Irish Party consent to be deprived of their rightful share in the government of their Empire."

This last remark is worth noting for the peculiarly new aspect in which it places the Irish question both from an English and an Irish point of view. From an English point of view it teaches us that in every part of the Empire another Ireland has arisen, one in heart and sympathy with the Old Country, just as the English Colonists are in touch with England. Emigration has not rid England of a turbulent population, like the voluntary exile of Sarsfield. It has merely transplanted and spread the discontent into soil hitherto free from it.

The Irish element in the Colonies is everywhere a factor to be reckoned with—municipal elections in Sydney are fought on the Home Rule question. And those who speak of the loyalty of the Colonies will do well to remember also the independence of those same Colonies, which is not a little fostered and fanned by the hereditary instincts which the children of starving emigrants have brought over from Ireland. A politician would perhaps pass it over in scorn; not so a statesman, and though many may question the fact of Lord Mountjoy's statement (I think) that America was lost by Irish emigrants, it is perfectly true that the great mass of Anglophobe literature and sentiment in the United States to-day is due almost entirely to the Irish

element, and the possible disloyalty of the Colonies might some day come from a like source.

At the same time, from the Irish point of view it raises an entirely new set of problems to those raised by what one might term the Little Irelanders, those who narrow the Irish question to the transformation of College Green from a commercial to a legislative centre, and think that the millennium is to arrive the day the flag on Dublin Castle changes its colour to green. The Home Rule question is an Imperial question, and will always remain so. If Grattan spoke truly when he said "The sea denies us union, but the ocean denies us separation," it is a thousand times more true now that Irish names and Irish blood have mingled with every English-speaking race upon the face of the globe and rendered the return of all the emigrants back to Ireland a physical impossibility, just as the return of the Jews to Palestine. Nevertheless, in character, in thought, in politics, in everything, in fact, that constitutes nationality apart from a geographical situation, even the most extreme patriot would never dream of attempting what, if logically carried out, would lead not only to a separation of the two mother countries, but to a division of every commercial centre in England and every colony abroad. A moderate, rational policy of Home Rule is the only one upon which it can be hoped to found a world-wide Empire securely, and of that moderate and rational policy

there is no better and more sincere representative than John Redmond. He alone of the various sections of Home Rulers seems to put forward a solution at the same time consistent with national aspirations and with unalterable facts.

A further quotation from Mr. Crook shows another aspect of his character.

"Strong Nationalist as he is, John Redmond has that touch of cosmopolitanism that is peculiarly Irish and is notably wanting in the average Englishman. A strict puritanical training has prevented me from becoming a frequent visitor to the theatre; on one of the rare occasions on which I have broken through this rule I went to see the 'Divine Sarah' play Hamlet in Paris. John Redmond occupied the stall immediately behind mine. A few days later we met in a carriage on the Underground in London and discussed the performance. No one who has heard the Irish leader quote Shakespeare can ever forget it. As he analysed the interpretation by the greatest actress of our time of Shakespeare's immortal creation, or criticized the *nuances* of the original that had been lost in translation, I was compelled to say to myself, 'Why, Hamlet is as real a person for you as is Arthur Balfour.' This land agitator, barrister, politician, statesman, whose eloquence had compelled the mother of Parliaments to an unwilling silence, had captivated the youth of Oxford and

of Ireland, and on whose words vast crowds in three continents had hung, is a student and interpreter of Shakespeare greater than most of our professors of English literature, because he understands men.

"I have written far more than I intended because it is so hard to convey, what is unintelligible to many, the reason why John Redmond is where he is. Fifty years hence it will not seem, as it does to-day, the language of friendly exaggeration to write that politically John Redmond is the lineal descendant of his great countryman Edmund Burke. But the passion for freedom and the passion for justice are the guiding stars of both."

There is yet another estimate of the character of John Redmond as the successor of Parnell which, I think, ought not to be passed over in silence. For, though expressing a view, perhaps, at one time partially correct, it can no longer be accepted as final. I refer to the estimate of Mr. Herbert Paul.

Speaking of the fall of Parnell, he says: "It was the Church of Rome and no individual that really succeeded Parnell in Ireland. Rome Rule came, not as the accompaniment of Home Rule, but as the alternative to Parnellism. The Church of Rome neither forgives nor forgets. His (Parnell's) successor, a man of great parliamentary capacity, was a Catholic, one of those liberal Catholics who had been educated at Trinity College. But in Ireland Mr. Redmond's influence was

at that time very small. His own Church condemned him. Once more, apparently for an indefinite period, the Irish priest resumed his sway. How far this change or reaction was for the better, and how far for the worse, it is not the business of a secular historian to decide. Of the fact there can be no doubt. Mr. McCarthy and Mr. Redmond were symbols of the two powers which, since the days of Guelphs and Ghibellines, have divided the Catholic world. In England Mr. McCarthy would have had no chance, for a mere hint of the revival of priestcraft would have buried the divorce in oblivion. In Ireland Mr. Redmond was foredoomed to failure. So long as he remained at the head of a group calling itself Parnellite, the priests could point at him as a rebel against the authority of the Church, the principles of religion and the sanctity of the home."

The criticism is not without foundation, but, though it is true that during the years of the split this description of the attitude of Mr. Redmond might have been correct, it is the very reverse to-day, for the anti-clerical Press speaks of him as the "priest's man" *par excellence*. But it is rather the clergy who have changed. The truth is that he is above all things a layman, and that he seeks, as a politician, to establish the two orders each in its proper sphere of independence. He has been accused and acclaimed as a second O'Connell, a second Clemenceau; in truth he is neither. O'Connell

would have headed an enthusiastic deputation of Irish members at the London Eucharistic Congress; Clemenceau would have written "Paraguay on Shannon." John Redmond did neither, and during the whole controversy which raged round the Education Bills, though assuring the English Catholics of every protection, he is always very careful not to compromise the political ideals of the party which he leads, which are absolutely unsectarian while retaining religion in its sphere of individualism—protected from bigotry and injustice.

In religion he is himself a strict Roman Catholic, and when in London, every Sunday he is to be seen at Mass at the church in Kensington High Street. Whenever any measure of practical Catholic importance is before Parliament he is always spokesman. If there is a question of altering the King's Declaration, there are few more keen than he, or if, as in 1903, some Benedictine monks are expelled from France and all their goods confiscated, they may be confident of finding in John Redmond a champion who can defend them, or any other Catholic interests, with a strong hand. But there is nothing of the theologian about him, and when he speaks for Catholics in the House of Commons, it is rather as one urging the great political maxim of fair play against the ultra-Protestant prejudice of some bigot, than as an exponent of dogma or doctrine. The intellectual side of Catholicism is to him an absolute blank

He is far too peremptory and practical in mind to be able to appreciate those niceties of thought, those shades of meanings, those clashings of dogmas, those contradictions between religion and science, which make Catholicism a philosophy. There is more of the Roman than the Greek about him. For example, quite apart from an æsthetic love of the general contour and appearance of the Church, he would have nothing in common with Wilfrid Ward or Dr. Barry: while the philosophical or psychological side of the great problems on the foundations of religious thought, such as Tyrrell treated of, are to him an unknown quantity. Newman he admires for the general principles laid down, say, for example, on University education or political economy, and quotations will be found in his speeches anent that very remarkable man. Manning, too, would also find an ardent admirer in him, because of his broad Irish and human sympathies; but perhaps the fervid eloquence of Father Tom Burke would be his favourite. He looks upon the Church as a great organism which, from the sacredness of its purpose and the sanctity of its officials, deserves the respect and reverence of the layman, and he leaves all questions of doctrine and discipline to those experts; and he is typically Irish in condemnation of all breaches of Church discipline.

In home life and in his tastes generally he is a man of frugal habits. He cares not for the ostentation of

public life, and when once he can retire from the searchlight and the stage of action, he loves, like Parnell, to spend the days in peace and tranquillity, free from the thousand and one annoyances that beset a man in his position. His chief sport is grouse shooting, and he still keeps up the genial house parties at Parnell's old shooting lodge at Aughavanagh—one of the old barracks which were built shortly after '98 as a sort of military cordon round the Wicklow Hills, which afforded them ample security from the rebels. The main block is still in a state of good preservation, the wings are almost in ruins; but the situation is magnificent and the place literally breathes legends, while the old prison, the loop-holes and small fortifications surmounting the earth-works, and the secret passage which gives a hollow ring all down the centre of the lawn till it emerges among the brambles of a hedge outside the walls, serve to add an air of romance to it and greatly interest the many Americans, Australians, and others who make up the August or winter parties.

There, surrounded by his family, he spends the summer months, recruiting his health after the long toil of the past session and preparing for the next. The days are generally spent upon the hills, while, in the evening, a quiet hour with his books, or perhaps a genial fireside conversation, will occupy him, with sometimes billiards or some other indoor game for the sake

of the more youthful members of the party. Or, again, perhaps Mrs. Redmond may prevail upon her husband to recite some of the many passages from his favourite authors. And in this he is inimitable, for Mr. Redmond has been an accomplished reciter since his college days, and is never tired of urging upon the younger generation the importance of effective delivery, as well as the beauty of the old school of Irish poets of the day of Moore or Davis.

His strenuous London life leaves but scant time for such recreations. But if there is anything of interest on the London stage, any Friday or Saturday may see him with his wife in the stalls of a theatre. Generally the finer mornings are spent riding in the Park, and Mr. Redmond is a well-known figure in the Row. But as soon as the House meets the Irish leader is in his place, if he has not been already a couple of hours at Westminster over some private party business. The week-ends are often spent out of London, while the shorter holidays, such as Easter or Whitsuntide, are sometimes spent abroad, in Germany, Italy, France or Egypt.

John Redmond has married twice, and he loves his home and his family. He has three children. The eldest, a daughter, Esther, was married about two years ago to a promising young New York doctor, Mr. W. Power. His second daughter, Johanna, is very

accomplished and possesses a facile pen. A few years ago she produced privately one of her plays in London and no doubt some of her more mature work will see the boards of the new Irish Theatre in Abbey Street, Dublin. Like her father, and like his sister, the late Mrs. Howard, she has a pronounced poetic sense, and her poems are occasionally to be seen in the Irish-American and Australian Press, as also are her clever short stories.

His only son, William, is now arrived at man's estate. He passed through the Royal University of Ireland and is at the present moment completing his education for the Irish Bar. When my mother died, leaving me an orphan, I was taken into his house as one of his own children, with a kindness and magnanimity which did for me all that a father could have done for the education of his own son, and never in the merest detail, whether in college pocket-money or in the numbers of riding lessons, was the least distinction made between me and my cousin, and I have always retained, after these many years, the pleasant memory of that—"Whatever Willie has, Louis must have too," as one of the most charming personal touches which revealed to me the essential note of justice which lies at the basis of his character. And though it is a strange metamorphosis by which one comes to look upon a man who stood *in loco parentis* purely from a political and literary stand-

point, perhaps it is not without value in a personal estimate like this, which, provided one has been sufficiently mentally weaned to distinguish the parental from the intellectual faculties, must gain at least in completeness of outlook.

But even in home life, though there was always a certain relaxation, there ever remained that predominant note of almost military sternness.

Redmond was described the other day by Frank Dilnot as one of the most serious men in the House and one whom he had never heard make a joke. Such a description, of an Irishman without a sense of humour, amounts almost to an accusation; but it is quite true. Redmond is too sincere and in earnest to be gifted with any very strong sense of humour. His brother, William, is one of the wits of the House, with his never-ending questions and incisive asides. But the picture of John Redmond in one of the smoking-rooms surrounded by a group of laughing Liberals and Conservatives would be hard to conceive. He has none of that hilarious joviality of the proverbial Pat. He cannot with serious and almost tragic tone keep the House in roars, like Mr. Healy; but his comparison of Lord Rosebery to the Duke of Plaza Toro, and the comparison of Mr. Healy to the excommunicated political Jackdaw of Rheims, is not without a touch of the Celt! For the most part, however, the humour is unconscious, as when, for

example, he turned upon an interrupting laugh with the words, "I hear the honourable member smile," or when some rather complicated metaphor gets entangled, as when he once remarked that, "Though the leaf might be torn from the annals it would still bear fruit!" or, again, when, by the merest lapsus linguæ, in the middle of a panegyric on the heroism of the two Boer republics, in a tone of passionate entreaty for mercy, he suddenly electrified the House by calling them "Grey-bearded old burglars"—instead of burghers. But he is not impervious to wit.

He enjoys as much as anyone the sayings and *bons mots* of Father Healy of Bray, or the weekly *Punch*, but for the most part it is the wit of Dickens or the "Ingoldsby Legends," or Gilbert and Sullivan's operas which he respects. There are few, probably, who enjoy the *Rivals* or the *School for Scandal* more than he—and he will often read the whole play aloud on a winter's evening, surrounded by his family. The wit of Charles Lever, Samuel Lover, the boisterous stage Irishman with "green whiskers and a pig," is to him painful, because nothing has done more than such writers' exhibitions to degrade the Irish character in the eyes of public opinion. But he loves the charming repartee of the Irish peasant and will listen with a kind of pride of race to the brilliant flashes that will illuminate the peasant's narrative as compared with that of the average

English farmer. But, on the whole, there is no gainsaying the fact that Mr. Redmond is abnormally serious.

As to his resemblance to his brother, I must confess I have never seen two men more absolutely dissimilar. The one is silent, reserved, calculating and consistent; the other conversational, spontaneous and impulsive in policy. The House, in question time and in witty interruptions and asides, counts the younger brother as one of its characters: the elder brother but seldom speaks, however, and never jokes.

Hence, when upon Queen Victoria's visit to Dublin the illustrated papers circled round the smoking-rooms of the House, showing Mr. Willie Redmond's hall door painted in the colour and design of a gorgeous Union Jack, and told of the scores of tourists in cars continually driving up to see these phenomenal decorations, the humour of the situation was enjoyed by everyone knowing the man; it would have lost half its point had it been played on his brother. There is often more ardour than argument in the younger Redmond's speeches: in those of his brother there is often far more suppressed emotion than visible expression. Again, the style of diction as well as the mode of delivery are more declamatory in the one, more objective and reasoned in the other. At the same time, there is in both the same sense of patriotism, the same religious fervour, the same

hatred of English misrule: the only difference being that in one it is more developed through sentiment, in the other more intellectual; and the characteristics which distinguished them as boys still stamp them as men, and in this they are not untypical of the two classes of Irishmen.

What, then, to sum up, can we say distinguishes the man? Wherein lies his power? In the first place, the man distinguishes the leader from the former leaders. He is to a great extent similar, to a great extent dissimilar, to the former leaders. His policy is the same, his personality different. He has not the same florid-fierce oratory of the Liberator: he has more of the quiet persuasiveness of Butt. He has all the hatred of English misrule of Grattan, without any of the personal bitterness of Parnell. He controls with power and dexterity the organizations that made Parnell supreme, without having the originality of mind that created him. He is a Catholic like O'Connell, but he has all the broad-mindedness of Protestant Grattan. He has all the power of the priests behind him, without being himself their tool: for like Parnell before him, he believes in the limits of clerical power. He has all the polished manners of Isaac Butt without any of his weakness. He may not inspire the same enthusiasm that brought thousands upon thousands to hear the speeches of the Liberator round the Hill of

Tara: but he has probably wider knowledge of the world than any of his predecessors and has received the welcome of the scattered Gaels from many more lands. He uses the agitation necessary to make him a power, without any of the ostentation that would merely make him a danger.

The secret of his power lies probably in his sense of moderation in thought and self-restraint in action, combined with an impenetrable personality which has only to be seen to be respected. In fact, there are probably few Irishmen who have impressed the House more with their absolute sincerity and unquestioned capability—and as a man he is probably more liked than any of his predecessors. There is a certain "Englishness" about him which appeals to the more sober-minded. He uses words in a rational sense and is never carried away by waves of emotion. He is no business man, but he has all those qualities which would have created one: he is no enthusiast, but he has all those passions which, if less regulated, would have made him one: and this is what the House respects.

A good picture is given by Mr. Frank Dilnot.

"Banish from your mind, in thinking of Mr. Redmond, the picture of the carelessly-dressed, merry Irishman, with a strong brogue and a merry quip for any situation. Here is a stern man between fifty and sixty years of age, perfectly dressed, carrying himself

with the dignity of a Gladstone. An Irishman's fun may lurk deep within Mr. Redmond's breast, but it is not observable. From his appearance he might be a well-to-do City man who will stand no nonsense. It is quite obvious that he is not a person with whom the frivolous could jest with impunity: he carries the air of the grand statesman of the past generation."

His power rests, like Parnell's, in a certain aloofness of disposition and a hauteur of mind. He is open to conviction, but once he has made up his mind it is like the steeling of iron: he does not argue, he insists. He does not submit an academic thesis, he imposes terms. He will not be led astray among the side issues of dispute: he retains the central idea of the proposition. He does not talk often or waste his time over trifling points, so that when he rises to speak the House knows there is something it ought to hear.

Above all, he knows the House perfectly. He knows its moods and its men. He does not pin his faith to Governments; but he does believe in the members as a body. This is probably why it has been said that organization and opportunity have been the two things in his mind for a generation. He has played a chessman's game trying to keep his party together among themselves and with their electorate, and has struck blow after blow at opportune moments. He knows the limits of the concessions of Cabinets, and when they

have been reached no simple gratitude will make him keep them in office. Neither the Local Government Act of Balfour nor the Land Transfer Act of Wyndham were accounted unto them for righteousness when the Unionist party had reached their end. He knows the value of a lobby conversation with eighty votes in his pocket, but perhaps the best tribute to his capacities is the position which he holds to-day and the position to which he has raised Home Rule. He is a strong individualist while at the same time condemning individualism. He believes one brain should actuate one organism, not because he believes in that modern dogma, the infallibility of majorities, so much as because he believes in their practical efficacy; and if at the present time he condemns the attitude of opposition taken up by Messrs. O'Brien and Healy, it is only because their attitude saps the very foundations of that strength and power which a united nation confers upon its leader.

CHAPTER X

THE MAN AND HIS METHODS

WHEN every other form of argument against the demands of the Irish leader fail, people usually have recourse to a denunciation of his tactics, and so his tactics often occupy a more prominent place in public criticism than either his objects or their motives. Hence no sketch of the man could be complete which did not contain at least an outline of the methods with which his name is not unjustly identified. The reason for the attack is probably that most people look upon Parliament as a kind of debating society instead of looking upon it as it really is, merely as an arena in which political battles are fought by every form of constitutional weapons. And John Redmond, as essentially a practical politician, understands this better than anyone, for it is one of the first lessons that an Irish leader has to learn.

Logic no more rules the House of Commons than it rules the world. Every politician has faced the fact, and that is why Irish political history is one monotonous reiteration of the watchwords—organization, agitation, and obstruction. For of spontaneous redress of Irish

grievances no one has ever heard, as Sydney Smith used to say; hence the Irish attitude is only the necessary result of the English attitude, just as the actions of the French Revolution must be explained in the light of the *ancien régime.*

John Redmond, were he to write a treatise on the ideal parliament, would no doubt paint it as a deliberative assembly. But finding himself always confronted with a chronic ignorance on Irish affairs only equalled by a chronic indifference to the Irish demands, his only course is to compel legislation. Were this not the case, the Irish party might be a school of experts, sitting in London to answer inquiries; as the case stands, the Irish leader has to make it into the most effective fighting force constitutionally possible, and in this he has succeeded from the first moment of his leadership; for in point of discipline, organization and political capacity there is probably no party in the House that can compare with it, and certainly no leader who occupies such an absolute position. How that position was achieved, how it is maintained in its present strength, is the story of John Redmond's methods, which, in point of fact, were the methods of every one of the Irish leaders before him.

To begin with, an Irish leader has two battles to fight: the one with political parties in the House of Commons, the other with public opinion outside it.

And perhaps none of John Redmond's predecessors have ever accomplished this herculean task in the complete manner in which he has done. Certainly none of them have preached the Irish cause in so many continents, or ever held the position of a dictatorship so absolute over English political parties.

So far as his own political principles are concerned, he is perfectly explicit and logical. He is a Parnellite through and through, and perhaps his speech at Maryborough, in October, 1900, gives as good an analysis of his "creed" as any he has ever made.

"My guiding principle in public life is perfectly simple," he said. "I have no faith, and never had, in any English political party. I have no faith, and never had, in English benevolence towards Ireland. I have no faith, and never had, in the possibility of any class of our population getting justice in the smallest particular for mere reason or argument or persuasion. No! we have never got anything, from the days of O'Connell down to to-day, without labour or suffering or sacrifice on our part, or without making a movement dangerous and menacing towards England. My own principle in public life is, therefore, to make every department of Government, from the highest to the lowest, from the Chief Secretary in his back room in Dublin Castle down to the land grabber and the bailiff in the country town, hard and dangerous. That

has always been my principle in public life. I have made no disguise of it. I have said it over and over again in the House of Commons.

"You people of the Queen's County want land reform," he continued. "You want reform for tenants in towns. You want a Catholic University. You want justice for the labourer in town and country. You will get none of these things, not the very smallest of them, until you make yourself a trouble and a danger to the English Government in your country. How to do that is largely a matter for yourselves. Someone spoke here of crime and outrage. Why, crime and outrage don't make you dangerous to England; on the contrary, crime and outrage play directly into the hands of your enemies. They constitute a justification before the whole world for any repressive measures that may be adopted: but so long as you keep your hands unstained by anything in the nature of crime against the laws of God—I speak not of the law of the land, because most of it is bad and ought to be broken—but so long as you keep your hands unstained by crime against the laws of God, and as long as you make your movement a power in Ireland and a danger every night and every day in the year to the British Government, so long will you have some chance of obtaining some remedy of some sort, at any rate, for your grievances."

This speech, taken by itself, might earn John Redmond the title of Agitator: but he is something more, for he is an organizer as well and the captain of a party whose very soul is organization. It is organized in its election, it is organized in its direction, it is organized in its action: and it is this fact that makes John Redmond's position in the House so peculiar.

The following passage, taken from the pen of Mr. James O'Donovan on the election of an Irish member, may serve to illustrate my meaning ("Daily Mail Year Book"):

"The manner in which Nationalist candidates in Ireland are selected differs entirely from the method pursued in England. When an election is announced in Ireland a convention is summoned in the constituency by the National Directory of the United Irish League in Dublin. At this convention clergymen of all denominations in the constituency are entitled to attend as ex-officio delegates; the elective bodies in whose jurisdiction the constituency lies are empowered to send representatives in fixed proportions, and other branches of the United Irish League, the Land and Labour Association (composed of agricultural labourers), and one or two other Nationalist organizations. Before the name of a candidate can be put to a vote in the Convention, he must sign a pledge 'to sit, act, and vote with the Irish Parliamentary party.' The candidate who has a clear majority of votes becomes the official

candidate of the party, and the party funds bear the entire expenses in case of a contest.

"Under such a system no 'nursing' of a constituency is necessary or possible. The candidate's expenses are paid for him, and when elected, he receives, if necessary, a modest allowance from the parliamentary fund, said to be £5 a week, with the liability to reduction for absence from the House after having been duly summoned by a Whip. The General Election in 1900 did not cost the Nationalist party quite £4,000."

Of the organization of direction the United Irish League is also the keystone, and in addition to the selection of individual candidates, it also acts as their guide in a body, the policy of the party being decided in the Conventions, so that from a purely political point of view it may be said to be the most representative in the world, since it is always going to the country. And so effective has it proved as a political weapon, that, in the mouth of the party's opponents, it has become a positive danger to the nation. With how much truth may be seen from the leader's own words.

"For my part," he said, in April, 1900, shortly after his election as chairman, "I desire to see the United Irish League spread over the whole of Ireland, many enemies though it may have. There are many who think it the League of one man. Now let me say

that I, for one, would not touch any organization that is to be the property of any one man, and this League, if it spreads through Ireland, as I hope it will, will be the property of no man or set of men: it will be the property of the people." Moreover, for fear of its being thought an official organization in the hands of one man, to the detriment of all individual action, he added: "My first duty to Ireland, in my opinion, is to preserve the union that has been created, and it requires inexhaustible patience upon my part, and a desire to conciliate every man who differs from me, and a desire to give way in this direction and in that in order to preserve discipline and unity; for I believe in conciliation, and I believe, as Parnell said in every sense of politics, in the spirit of compromise."

But this compromise must not extend to absolute chaos of principle, and hence, though personally John Redmond might try to co-operate with others, he stands officially by the organization once it has adopted a policy of its own, and will allow no other organization to clash with it. It was for this reason that when, in 1909, several new organizations made their appearance, he wrote to the Press warning the country of the danger of a split and saying that "The Irish party, all of whose members are bound by pledge to act together outside as well as inside the House of Commons, and the United Irish League are the only authorized

organizations seeking to obtain Home Rule by constitutional means."

Of the organization of action, the constitution of the party itself is the best example, for it is not enough to create a party without being able to use it; hence John Redmond, when a movement to discredit its utility had arisen in Ireland, found it his duty to lay plainly before the country the essentials of the party system.

Speaking at Ballybofey, in Donegal, on the 29th of August, 1907, he thus spoke of the National movement and its needs:

"A parliamentary party representing Ireland in the British Parliament is as necessary—from some points of view is more necessary to-day than at any period since the Union; and further than that, I say that the conditions upon which such a party can be of value and can achieve victories for Ireland remain to-day absolutely unchanged.

"First of all, the party must be the mouthpiece of a united, organized and determined people at home. An Irish party in the English Parliament which did not represent any organized and united people in Ireland would be useless, and, in my judgment, would be worse than useless. How stands the National organization at this moment behind the National party? It is ridiculous to blame the party or to be disappointed

with its achievements if the country itself had not fulfilled its duty—hence the first need of the country is to realize that their party cannot achieve good work for Ireland unless the people themselves do their duty at home, and I therefore to-day call upon the Irish people in every part of the country to strengthen the Irish organization, so that the Irish party may be able to speak with a certain confidence in the name of the mass of the people at home here in Ireland.

"The second condition without which no party in Parliament can be of any value is that it must be a united and pledge-bound party. A party of independent items, a party of gentlemen, each one of whom went into the party on conditions of his own, would be an absolutely useless instrument for achieving Irish rights.

"Further than this, the party, to be useful to Ireland, must be an independent party. It must be independent of all political parties. I have sat now in the House of Commons in opposition to Liberal and Tory Governments for twenty-seven years. I have taken part in driving from office Liberal Governments and Tory Governments in turn, and I say to you that the Irish party is absolutely independent of all political combinations in England. We have no alliance with the present Liberal party. We would make no alliance with them except upon one condition, and that would be that they would not only determine to introduce a full Home

Rule Bill for Ireland, but that they would make it the first and paramount item in their programme.

"Now, with reference further to the party, if it is to be useful it must be composed of honest, capable men. In this matter the party is the result of the action of the Irish people themselves. I have not interfered in the selection of candidates for Ireland. I am not sure that I could not have made a fair claim to have my opinion asked with reference to the candidates, because if you want us to achieve good work, we, at any rate, ought to expect you would give us useful and efficient instruments to carry on the work, and it would not have been an unreasonable thing if I had asked the Irish people to allow me some voice in advice, at any rate, in the selection of candidates. But I did not do so. I have left the conventions for the selection of candidates absolutely free, and if the party, in the opinion of any set of people, is not made up of capable or honest men, the blame, and the fault, and the crime, would be upon the Irish people themselves.

"Now, with such a party as I have described, united, pledge-bound, disciplined, independent of all English parties, composed of honest and capable men, and, above all, representing a determined, organized and united people at home—with such a party it is my profound conviction that we can in the future, as we have done in the past, win great ameliorative reforms for the

people of Ireland; and further, that we can, in a comparatively short space of time, win for this country the right of full national self-government. Fellow countrymen, Ireland has, in my opinion, at this moment such a party and it would be sheer midsummer madness, it would be folly unworthy of a nation of children, if this great weapon which has won so much in the past were now to be laid aside because it has not succeeded in winning in a couple of years from the present Government a full measure of national self-government."

That the Irish party's strength thus depends upon the balance of power, is of course evident, so evident, in fact, that it has called forth many a protest—one only just recently in the *Fortnightly Review*, asking Englishmen how long they would stand English politics being made the sport of aliens—while there have been few accusations more often repeated than that a party was pandering for the Irish vote. Gladstone was not free from the accusation and John Redmond has frequently been criticized for thus standing aloof from other parties and always awaiting the passing of the crisis that heralds a defeat of one of the rivals to give him the opportunity of extracting concessions from it in its dying struggles.

From an Irish point of view, the position can stand the criticism well. For as long as Ireland remains a separate entity, separate not only geographically, but in its various interests, so long must the representatives

give effect to that independence of requirements by standing aloof from the programmes of other parties. It would be as absurd to tie Ireland down to Free Trade because she wants Home Rule as it would be to expect every Tariff Reformer to be necessarily an opponent of Irish autonomy. The interests that separate English parties are not Irish interests, therefore they cannot be expected to win over Irish sympathies. A Socialist measure might win the support of the Nationalist party, because it favoured a class of Irish tenants; but another Socialist measure might merit its hostility if by, say, wholesale secularization it endeavoured to subvert the faith of the greater part of the Irish population. It is true the Irish party forms one of the great democratic parties in politics, but it is more conservative than the Conservatives themselves in matters of religion —at least, as far as individual members of it are concerned.

It is, however, from the English point of view that John Redmond's position is most attacked, and that there is most hostility to his dictatorship. The real fault is not in the person or the position, it is in the system: and as long as party politics continue, so long must it endure. Any minority may obtain the balance of power, and it is no more odious because it is Irish than because it is a minority at all, and any resentment of the exercise of it is nothing less than

a public repudiation of the fundamental doctrine of parliamentary government." If it is wrong for England to be governed by an Irish element, it is no less unfair for Ireland to be ruled by the English element. One cannot resist Home Rule on the plea that Home Rulers are interfering with our self-government, for we thus admit at once the justice of their contention.

Mr. Stead, who treated a similar situation some ten years ago, when Mr. Asquith, it may be recalled, declared that he would never take part in an administration that depended for its existence on the Irish vote, then wrote: "The parliamentary system consists in the assembling within a single chamber of the representatives of the duly enfranchised subjects of the King. In the eye of the Constitution, it matters nothing whether a member takes his ticket from Galloway or from Aberdeen, from Cork or from Birmingham. He is an integral part of the Imperial Parliament, and there is no discrimination as to origin in the counting of votes in the division lobby. So long, therefore, as the Union exists, we betray the fundamental principle of that instrument when we attempt to differentiate between the Irish or any other vote. We have compelled the Irish members to meet us in Westminster, and we have comforted ourselves in so doing by declaring before all our Gods that we admit Irish members to all the rights and privileges and honours of the position to which we

have called them. For Mr. Asquith, or any other man, to declare that he will refuse to carry on the Government of the King unless he has a majority independent of the Irish is in effect to declare that, whatever the law of the House of Commons may be, he will refuse to count the votes of his Irish fellow-members, and thereby set them, so far as he can, outside the pale of the Constitution."

It is not, however, merely a game of divisions in the lobby that John Redmond plays, for the party is not only a voting entity, it is also a thinking and speaking entity. It must be a moving spirit upon public opinion, or else its sphere of work is restricted to those occasions, few and far between, when it can for a moment grasp the balance of power. This is what Mr. Redmond is never tired of impressing on his followers, and which by his English and foreign tours he illustrates in his own person. He is, therefore, more than a member of Parliament, he is "a Parliamentarian"; that is to say, he speaks of social and economic grievances as one statesman does to another. "Parliamentarianism" is to him the language of all constitutional progress. Not that members of Parliament are a distinct class so much as that they fulfil the functions of the intelligence in the body politic, and that an appeal to them is the surest way of reaching the brain of the nation. The House of Commons is probably what he respects most in the English Consti-

tution, and a passage in one of his American speeches gives a singularly good example of this. There are few sentiments more characteristic of the man.

"In the main the House of Commons is, I believe, actuated by a sense of manliness and fair play. Of course, I am not speaking of it as a governing body, in that character it has been towards Ireland always ignorant and always unfair; I am treating it simply as an assembly of men, and I say of it, it is a body where sooner or later every man finds his proper level, where mediocrity and insincerity will never permanently succeed, and where ability and honesty of purpose will never permanently fail." It is to him, in fact, all that is most representative of English feeling and English thought.

And again, "The House of Commons throughout its long and chequered history has most of the time been a true reflex of the mind of the British nation, and its attitude at different periods towards different men and towards events has been the attitude which the nation at large has eventually assumed. During even my short time I have seen it change again and again in its way of regarding and feeling towards certain men and certain events, and I have seen the British nation invariably follow, or at least keep up with, its varying phases."

It is for this reason that John Redmond believes in

Parliamentarianism, apart from passing politics, and it is for this reason that, though politically never more insignificant than during the days of the overwhelming Liberal majorities, he was never in point of fact more powerful. Half his power, in fact, comes from the public opinion he has thus been able to mould, and which he calls the "outside forces" that make for Home Rule.

Speaking of this movement in 1907, he said:

"Let me for a moment ask you to consider some of what I may call the outside conditions and influences which affect the Irish cause at this moment—influences apart from Ireland. First of all, it is an undoubted fact that the bitter hostility to Home Rule which swayed so many of the people of England twenty years ago is absolutely dead. Within the last few months vigorous and most costly efforts were made by the Unionists of this country to rouse an anti-Irish campaign in Great Britain by speeches, by the circulation of lying literature, and by all the machinery which was well known twenty years ago, by the circulation of bogus stories of bogus outrages and so forth, and this campaign fell absolutely flat and was an absolute failure. I believe, for myself, the great masses of the working people of Great Britain are not in their hearts hostile to Ireland or her fair demands. They are in this position: they are struggling for their rights themselves, and their time is occupied with their own affairs, and, further than that, they know

very little about Ireland, and therefore they are indifferent and apathetic: but hostile, really hostile, to the fair demands of Ireland, I do not believe the masses of the working people of Great Britain are at this moment. Many of the old inveterate enemies of Irish freedom—I will not mention names—amongst leading statesmen of England, have disappeared or are disappearing, and speaking of them now individually, I give you my own individual opinion.

"I say that the overwhelming majority of the present Liberal party in the House of Commons are in favour of a measure of Home Rule for Ireland. Further than that, the party of the future in England, the Labour party, is united as one man with us, and, greatest perhaps of all the outside influences working in favour of Home Rule is the everyday experience of the House of Commons. Every day the sittings of the House of Commons furnish an argument in favour of Home Rule for Ireland. There is a congestion of work there, growing rapidly day by day, which is showing the English people that if they do not lighten the load by sending local affairs home to Ireland, and probably to Scotland and Wales, for management, representative institutions in England will sink beneath the burden. I tell you the everyday experience of the House of Commons constitutes an argument in favour of Home Rule for Ireland, and it is being pressed upon the minds of

Englishmen. . . . " Again, speaking of the Colonies, he said : "At the back of all that you have the opinion of all the self-governing Colonies, from the mouth of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and from the mouth of General Botha. Every self-governing Colony at this moment has openly declared by Parliamentary resolutions and by the speeches of their leaders that they are in favour of Home Rule for Ireland. I say to you, these are all outside conditions and influences, but I say, if you had nothing else, and if you left Ireland's own efforts out of account altogether, these outside influences make it absolutely certain that in the ordinary course of events Home Rule for Ireland will come, and the influence of Ireland's own action at home will decide whether it will come soon or not."

This feeling on the part of the Colonies is, however, in no small measure due to his own exertions and shows the real Imperialism of the Home Ruler. He believes in the conscience of the Empire because he believes in its unity. And he believes in its unity because he believes in the unity of the two races who have built it up. He is an Irish Imperialist because he feels the Empire is Irish. But if an Imperialist, he is at least a consistent Imperialist, and one who looks upon that bond, if applied in the same spirit, as a safeguard of independence rather than a danger, and it is for this reason he is anxious to show that Ireland and the

Empire are of one mind upon the first principle of all federations, namely, Home Rule.

And from the thousands of letters and resolutions of sympathy from the Colonies I may select one which may be taken at once as the most important and most characteristic.

In 1905, the Australian Federal House of Representatives adopted a motion of Mr. Higgins for a petition to the King in favour of Home Rule for Ireland, thereby exercising a right which, Mr. Higgins maintained, the Colonial Office had already recognized, and John Redmond received the following telegram:

"Melbourne,

"October 19th, 1905.

"Resolution involving petition to King favouring Home Rule carried in both Houses Federal Legislature by substantial majority.

"NICHOLAS O'DONNELL."

The resolution was identical with one passed by the Canadian Parliament in 1903, and ran as follows:

"May it please your Majesty,

"We, your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the members of the House of Representatives in Parliament assembled, desire most earnestly in your name and on behalf of the people whom we

represent to express our unswerving loyalty and devotion to your Majesty's person and Government.

"We have observed with feelings of profound satisfaction the evidence afforded by recent legislation and recent debates in the Houses of Parliament of the United Kingdom of a sincere desire to deal justly with Ireland, and in particular we congratulate the people of the United Kingdom on the remarkable Act directed towards the settlement of the land question, and on the concession to the people of Ireland of a measure of Local Government for municipal purposes. But the sad history of Ireland since the Act of Union shows that no British Parliament can understand and especially deal with the economic and social conditions of Ireland. Enjoying and appreciating as we do the blessings of Home Rule here, we would humbly express the hope that a just measure of Home Rule may be granted to the people of Ireland. They ask it through their representatives—never has request more clear, consistent, and continuous been made by any nation. As subjects of your Majesty, we are interested in the peace and contentment of all parts of the Empire, and we desire to see the long-standing grievance at the very heart of the Empire removed. It is our desire for the

solidarity and permanence of the Empire, as a power making for peace and civilization, that must be our excuse for submitting to your Majesty this respectful petition."

This petition was supported by the Federal Premier, Mr. Deakin; the Labour leader, Mr. Watson; Mr. Isaacs, Attorney-General; Sir William Lyne, Minister for Trade, and Mr. Chapman, Postmaster-General. Mr. Deakin, though he spoke as a private member, pointed out that the Colonial Secretary had admitted the right of the Colonies to make such a petition, and gave as an example one on Chinese Labour, saying he looked forward to a time when the Devolution in Ireland would be only a prelude to Devolution in the Empire. John Redmond felt the force of such a support and at once wired back to Dr. Nicholas O'Donnell, of Melbourne.

"Convey to Higgins and supporters thanks for valuable service to Ireland. Every self-governing Colony in Empire has now declared for Home Rule for Ireland.

"JOHN REDMOND."

It is not, however, to the conscience of the Empire alone John Redmond appeals, but to that of all English-speaking nations. Hence the much misunderstood

American missions, which, since his first in 1886, seem to have been made the special ground of attack on the part of Unionist organs, who seek to extract disloyal sentiments from his speeches there; and I have often seen garbled passages which, I recognized, were turned into the strangest contortions to suit party ends. The aim is twofold, financial and national, as John Redmond himself told Mr. Stead in 1901.

"I am going to America for the purpose of explaining to our people the union now happily effected in Ireland in all sections of the Nationalists. I shall set forth the prospects of the Irish cause and ask them to give substantial support to the United Irish League. My attitude to the Irish physical force societies who have refused to welcome me to America is clear and obvious. I have no quarrel with any man as to the freeing of Ireland in the way he thinks the best. And something akin to despair of constitutional methods is quite natural. I, however, do not despair; on the contrary, I think that what we have already achieved justifies every confidence that we shall reach our end by the constitutional road." But the point most worth noting in these American tours is the attitude of the Irish themselves, which displays a loyalty to the land of their birth which has probably no parallel in history. "Perhaps the greatest glory of our nation," said John Redmond on one of these occasions, "is to be found in

the fact that our people, driven by misfortune and misrule from the land of their forefathers, and coming to the land rude, ignorant, and poor, have yet been able to bear an honourable part in building up the fortunes of America and to give the world undeniable proof that, in addition to the qualities of fidelity and honesty, Irishmen under a free constitution can be worthy sons and good citizens. The Irish people in this great republic, no less as American citizens than as Irish Nationalists, have arrested the attention and commanded the admiration of the world.

"The Irish soldier, whose sword was consecrated to the service of America, dreamed as he went into battle of the day when his adopted country might strike a blow for Irish liberty. The Irish business man, who found in one of your gigantic cities scope for his enterprise and for his industry, looked forward to the day when from his store help might go across the Atlantic to sustain Ireland's champions on the old sod. The Irish labourer, whose brawny arms have built your railroads and reared your stately palaces, in the midst of his labours laid aside his daily or weekly mite to help those who were fighting time after time with one weapon or another in the old cause against the enemies of Ireland. Rich and poor, high and low alike, the Irish in America have never forgotten the land whence they sprang, and our people at home, in their

joys and in their sorrows, in their hopes and in their fears, turn ever for help and encouragement and confidence to this great republic upon whose fortunes and whose future rest to-day the blessing of the Irish race."

But all these missions and tours are especially designed to give the Irish demand the fullest possible publicity in order to evoke the most complete sympathy which can be given to it by the English-speaking peoples, and the reception of the Irish delegates is always a public event in New York and Boston. Thus the *Freeman*, reviewing the mission of 1904, said :

"A really international character was given to the proceedings of the United States officials. As if to emphasize the solidarity of North America in approval of Irish claims, the Governors of all the Northern states followed up the action of the Premier and Cabinet of the Canadian Government by associating themselves with the proceedings. The Governor of the old Quaker State presided at the meeting, and the Governors of twenty-five other States of the Union from New York to Montana and from Texas to Illinois sent acceptance of the rôle of President of the organizing committee, and all the Catholic prelates of the State of Philadelphia joined in the welcome to the representatives of the Irish Party. For a parallel we have to go back to those remarkable demonstrations in New

York, Boston and Chicago in the autumn of 1890, before dissension had raised its head in the National ranks."

A passage from Mr. Bernard Shaw, always brilliant on Irish affairs, gives a singular endorsement of the methods of John Redmond as a whole, and is worth quoting:

"I do not claim it as a natural superiority in the Irish nation that it dislikes and mistrusts fools, and expects its political leaders to be clever and humbug-proof," he writes in the preface to "John Bull's Other Island." "It may be that if our resources included the armed forces and virtually unlimited money which push the political and military figure-heads of England through bungled enterprises to a muddled success, and create an illusion of some miraculous and divine innate English quality that enables a general to become a conqueror with abilities that would not suffice to save a cabman from having his license marked, and a member of Parliament to become Prime Minister with the outlook on life of a sporting country solicitor educated by a private governess, we should lapse into gross intellectual sottishness, and prefer leaders who encouraged our vulgarities by sharing them and flattered us by associating them with purchased successes, to our betters. But as it is, we cannot afford that sort of encouragement and flattery in Ireland. The odds against which our leaders have to fight would be too heavy for the fourth-rate Englishmen whose

leadership consists for the most part in marking time ostentatiously until they are violently shoved, and then stumbling blindly forward (or backward), wherever the shove sends them. We cannot crush England as a Pickford's van might crush a perambulator. We are the perambulator and England the Pickford. We must study her and our real weaknesses and real strength; we must practise upon her slow conscience and her quick terrors; we must deal in ideas and political principles, since we cannot deal in bayonets; we must outwit, outwork, outstay her; we must embarrass, bully, even conspire and assassinate, when nothing else will move her, if we are not all to be driven deeper and deeper into the shame and misery of our servitude. Our leaders must be not only determined enough, but clever enough, to do this.

"We have no illusions as to the existence of any mysterious Irish pluck, Irish honesty, Irish bias on the part of providence, or sterling Irish solidity of character that will enable an Irish blockhead to hold his own against England. Blockheads are of no use to us; we were compelled to follow a supercilious, unpopular, tongue-tied, aristocratic, Protestant Parnell, although there was no lack among us of fluent imbeciles, with majestic presences and oceans of dignity and sentiment, to promote into his place could they have done his work for us.

"It is obviously convenient that Mr. Redmond should be a better speaker and rhetorician than Parnell; but if

he began to use his powers to make himself agreeable instead of making himself reckoned with by the enemy; if he set to work to manufacture and support English shams and hypocrisies instead of exposing and denouncing them; if he constituted himself the permanent apologist of doing nothing, and, when the people insisted on his doing something, only roused himself to discover how to pretend to do it without really changing anything, he would lose his leadership as certainly as an English politician would, by the same course, attain a permanent place on the front bench. In short, our circumstances place a premium on political ability, whilst the circumstances of England discount it; and the quality of the supply naturally follows the demand."

Hence we see that John Redmond, from the point of view of a parliamentary leader, is right in his methods. An Irish leader cannot adopt any other tactics. Isaac Butt tried 'passive insistence,' was greatly respected, and never listened to. John Redmond is a man who is fighting a political battle against probably every odds that can possibly handicap a leader. His party is one of the smaller ones. Every discontent upon his part is looked upon as a disloyalty. Every attempt to organize a demonstration is looked upon as engineered ruffianism. An appeal for funds for the retaining of members in London is sufficient to get them the name of 'a kept party.' Once their votes become effective

they are 'stealing legislation.' If an English party is at one in principle with the Irish demand, it is pandering for the Irish vote. If he is pleading for religious equality, he is spoken of as a priests' puppet trying to establish the reign of clericalism. If his followers support him, they are henchmen; if they revolt, it is that he no longer represents anyone but himself. But at the same time, whether he is called a leader or a chairman, a boss or a figurehead, the great point remains the same, that the Irish demand is put forward effectively and intelligently and the recording pages of the Statute Book bear witness to the wisdom of the policy. But for that policy, but for that organization, but for that world-wide appeal making the Irish cause popular throughout the Empire and powerful in the House of Commons, John Redmond, brilliant orator and statesman though he is, would still remain a political zero.

CHAPTER XI

THE MESSAGE

THE IRISH DEMAND

OVER half a century ago Disraeli said, "I want to see a public man come forward and say what the Irish question really is. One says it is a physical question—another, a spiritual. Now it is the absence of an aristocracy, then it is the absence of railways. It is the Pope one day and potatoes the next."

If there is anyone who can be said to be that man to-day, it is John Redmond; and it is the answer to Pitt's question to Grattan, "What does Ireland now want?" (which has been repeated by every English statesman since 1794) that I have ventured to call the Irish leader's message. A little girl was once asked for the date of the Conquest of Ireland, and replied, "It began in 1169 and is going on still." John Redmond's answer is the same.

"Each generation of Englishmen," writes John Redmond, in a preface to Barry O'Brien's "Hundred Years of Irish History," "have comforted themselves

with the reflection that they were righteous men, though their ancestors governed Ireland infamously. No Englishman justified the government of Ireland in the sixteenth, seventeenth or eighteenth century, and even the Englishmen of the latter part of the nineteenth century condemn the government of the men of the earlier part. But the truth is, that there is no generation of Englishmen who can plume themselves on their administration of Irish affairs. Ignorance and ineptitude are the characteristics of the English rulers of Ireland of every generation; yet Englishmen talk of Irish ingratitude and sneer at Irish grievances. 'What does Ireland now want?' is the stock question of English statesmen of the twentieth century." And he adds, "Were I to draw an indictment against English rule in Ireland, I should confine myself to the nineteenth century."

In fact, it may be said that the "Irish Problem" hardly existed before the Union—certainly not as far as English politics were concerned. It really started the day the English House of Commons took over the government of Ireland, in the general panic that followed the rebellion of America and the spread of the French Revolution. Before that date Irish domestic questions were thrashed out by Irishmen, on Irish soil and in Irish interests; since then they have only been attended to by Englishmen upon compulsion and

From an engraving by B. Winkles, after an engraving by George Petrie.

PARLIAMENT HOUSE, DUBLIN.

Now the Bank of Ireland

[*To face p.* 290.

entirely in the interests of one class of the community —the absentees. Irish discontent was thus forced upon the nation by the English Parliament. This was what Grattan foretold a century ago: this is what John Redmond proves has now taken place. And considering the general ignorance upon Irish affairs, it may not be without advantage to recapitulate some of the history of the Irish demand, in order to view the Irish leader's message in the light of experience.

For "What Home Rule was" is the best answer to the question, "What will Home Rule be?" What, then, was the nature of the Parliament of Ireland before the Union? It can be seen in Mr. Redmond's preface to Mr. Barry O'Brien's "One Hundred Years of Irish History."

"The first Irish Parliament was held in the reign of Edward I., in 1295. The earliest Irish statutes date from 1310. From 1295 to 1495, the Irish Parliament was free from the control of the English Parliament. No law made in England was binding upon Ireland. It was in no wise necessary for the English Parliament to ratify the Irish statutes. In 1495 the first attempt at any innovation was made. Poynings's Law was passed. It provided: (1) that all acts hitherto passed in England should be binding in Ireland; (2) that no Parliament should hereafter be summoned in Ireland unless the Viceroy had obtained the King's licence to hold it;

(3) that the heads of bills to be introduced in the Irish Parliament should be first submitted to the English Privy Council; (4) that the consent of King and Privy Council should be obtained before such bills were introduced. It will be seen, however," Mr. Redmond adds, "that, servile as this Parliament was, it did not surrender its independence: it did not recognize England's right to make laws for Ireland.

"It recognized the right of the King of England, who was also King of Ireland, to exercise jurisdiction over Irish legislation, and it adopted English acts previously passed. That was all. It still received co-ordinate authority, and this remained the state of things until the reign of George I. Then an act was passed in 1719 which provided that 'the King's Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords and Commons of Great Britain, had, hath, and of right ought to have, full power and authority to make laws to bind the people and the kingdom of Ireland.'"

This, then, was the great usurpation, so unjustified in theory and so disastrous in fact. It was a complete reversal of the policy of self-government, and it was this, and this alone, which first aroused the desire for political independence in Ireland. At first the right of the English Parliament to exercise jurisdiction over Irish legislation was chiefly engineered against the religion of the country, so that one may say Unionist

policy is the last trace of persecution and Liberal policy the beginning of toleration.

"The beginning of the Irish penal code," as Lecky says, "was a law passed in 1691 by the English Parliament for excluding all Catholics from the Irish one," but so successful did this become, that it not only excluded every Papist, but it completely denationalized the Parliament: it was not only as if none but High-Churchmen were allowed to sit in the English chamber but as if, in addition, every seat was in the gift of an hereditary Privy Council.

Thus speaking of the year 1753, Froude says, "A majority in the House of Commons was at this time returned by four great families: the Fitzgeralds of Kildare, the Boynes, the Ponsonbys and the Beresfords—the political sovereigns of Ireland. The Government was carried on by their assistance, and they received in return the patronage of the State. The Viceroy understood the meaning of the vote. Patriotic orators were silenced by promotion. Opposition to England's initiation of money bills was suspended, till the great families were again hungry, and fresh expectants of promotion were in a position to be troublesome."

Such is the terrible indictment of the acknowledged apologist of English rule in Ireland. It was, therefore, a national, and not merely a Catholic grievance, for when the echoes of Bunker's Hill reached Ireland,

when four thousand Irish troops had been sent to America, and the Mayor of Belfast fruitlessly appealed for English help to defend the country against French invasion (then a scare, as often since), there rose, as Lecky says, "one of those movements of enthusiasm that only occur two or three times in the history of a nation. The cry 'To arms!' passed through all the land and was responded to by all parties and creeds. They arose to defend their country from the invasion of the foreign army and from the encroachments of the alien legislature."

There was nothing hostile to the Empire, it is worth noting, but there was the bitterest hatred against the policy of the Government. In fact, with the very same breath as they were asking for legislative independence they were appealing for a defensive union against foreign invasion and a commercial equality in free exports of wool, a trade in which about half the population were engaged. On April the 19th, 1780, Grattan propounded what may be called The Irish Declaration of Rights, which ran that, first, "The King, with the consent of the Parliament of Ireland, was alone competent to enact laws to bind Ireland;" and second, that "Great Britain and Ireland were indissolubly united, but only under the tie of a common sovereign."

The demand, backed by the volunteers and the nation, was successful. A couple of years later, in 1782, Lord

North, who had lost America and would in all probability have lost Ireland as well, was displaced, and Fox took his place, the Duke of Portland becoming Lord Lieutenant. Pitt was the Chamberlain, Fox was the Gladstone of his day, for he foresaw that only on Home Rule principles could Ireland be satisfied. Hence, when the Irish Houses had assembled, the following message was read from the English Premier: "I have it in command from His Majesty to inform this House that His Majesty being concerned to find that discontents and jealousies are prevailing upon matters of great weight and importance, His Majesty recommends it to this House to take the same into their most serious consideration, in order to effect such a final adjustment as may give mutual satisfaction to His Kingdoms of England and Ireland." Grattan's speech on the occasion is very significant, and never more so than at present, when another leader is on the eve of a constitutional crisis identical in almost every particular, save, perhaps, that one hundred years of disaster consequent on the reversal of the generous policy that was then contemplated may have taught us some political wisdom.

"I found Ireland on her knees," he said. "I watched over her with an eternal solicitude. I have traced her progress from injuries to arms and from arms to liberty. Ireland is now a nation." The point is most important as involving the high-water mark of constitutional

independence consistent both with the national aspirations of one of Ireland's noblest patriots and one of the most loyal of the old Imperialists.

The statute ran as follows:

"Be it enacted that the right claimed by the people of Ireland to be bound only by the laws enacted by His Majesty and the Parliament of that Kingdom and to have all actions at law and in equity which may be instituted in that kingdom decided in His Majesty's Courts, without appeal thence, shall be and is hereby declared and asserted for ever and shall at no time hereafter be questioned or questionable."

This statute is the Magna Charta of Home Rulers: the one point to which they always return; and it is the wholesale corruption by which it came to be torn up that forms one of the blackest stains in the whole annals of English history. No one outside a lunatic asylum would ever seek seriously to defend the methods by which the Union was passed, and probably few would like to base England's right upon such a piece of highway robbery (to use the mildest term that will apply). Hence, were the Home Rule question purely a matter of history, one could say at once that the flaw in England's title is as evident as the sun in the heavens. But like a barrister, John Redmond waives the point for the moment, and prefers to plead his case on another argument—that of the prosperity of Ireland under that

system which the Union abolished. Ireland under Grattan's Home Rule Parliament was prosperous, loyal and contented; under Pitt's system it at once became bankrupt, disloyal, discontented.

Of the period between 1782 and 1800, which saw Ireland's exports increase over one-half and her population over one-third, Lord Clare said, "No country in the world ever made such great advance in cultivation and commerce, agriculture and manufactures with the same rapidity in the same time." "Her laws were well arranged and administered," said Lord Plunkett, "a constitution fully recognized and established, her revenues and manufactures thriving beyond the most sanguine hopes—an example to any other country of her extent."

But even this prosperity was in spite of things, for the Irish Government was not responsible to the Irish Parliament. Accordingly, corruption still went on. "The country was placed," said Grattan in 1790, "in a sort of interval between the ceasing of a system of oppression and the forming of a system of corruption." Two-thirds of the land was in the hands of grantees of confiscation. Twenty-five landowners held 116 seats, of which one-half belonged to three families; while the pension list amounted to over a million. As to the sale of peerages, Curran used to say, "It is as notorious as the sale of cart-horses in the Castle Yard; the publicity is the

same, the terms not very different, the horses not warranted sound, the other animals warranted rotten." It was this Unionist policy against which Grattan thundered. "Reform Parliament," he used to say, "and let the King identify himself with his people, and try this plan; for the ultimate consequence of a union will be Separation."

The "fomented rebellion of '98" was but the natural result of such a state of things. The Union, the real cause of the rebellion, was euphemistically called its remedy. "The rebellion of 1798, with all the accumulated miseries it entailed, was the direct and predicted consequence of Pitt's policy," writes Lecky. "Ireland in 1795 was singularly easy to govern had it been governed honestly and by honest men. Pitt sowed in Ireland the seeds of discord and bloodshed, religious animosities and social disorganization, which paralysed the energies of the country and rendered possible the success of his machinations." (Lecky on Grattan, 14th ed., 1871.)

Thus it is to the few years of practical experience in Home Rule that John Redmond appeals for a justification of his proposals; it is to a century of the reversal of that policy he points as the condemnation of its continuance.

The demand of John Redmond to-day is the demand of Grattan in 1782. There is no question of separation —merely one of internal administration. His plea for

From an engraving by F. C. Lewis, after the picture by K. Kenny.

HENRY GRATTAN

Moving the Declaration of Rights in the Irish House of Commons, April 16th, 1782

[*To face p.* 298.

reform and settlement of grievances and his protests against extrinsic interference are the same. His name does not stand so much for a measure as for a principle; he is a Gladstonian and follower of Fox as opposed to a disciple of Pitt and Salisbury; he is an advocate of autonomy as opposed to autocracy; he believes in decentralization as opposed to centralization in matters of government; he knows the full strength of federation, but he also knows the weakness of union; he is a natural rebel to coercion in any form, religious or national, and there is none who has been more moderate and at the same time more earnest than he in seeking to bring about a spirit of conciliation between the two religions and the two races in Ireland.

In fact, every Irish leader's speeches to-day read exactly alike—those of Grattan, of O'Connell, Butt and Parnell, as well as those of Redmond, and it seems strange how in the light of history every leader has been branded as a rebel to the Empire simply for protesting against the Castle Government of Ireland. In truth, Home Rule has never been fought except as a scare; and certainly it is high time that a misunderstanding which has cost the nation four millions of population should be rectified. I have said that the message of every leader is the same. This is true. But if there is any difference at all between the messages, it is rather the result of the personalities

of the leaders and their times which caused them to present them differently: not that their aims differed.

Daniel O'Connell was a constitutionalist by nature, for in his youth he had been shocked by the excesses of the Revolution in France; but above all he was a religious leader, and to him not a little of the sectarian bitterness of to-day is due. As for his secular efforts, they were a failure, for in John Redmond's words, "The English people have no conception that between 1829 and 1869 no great measure of justice for Ireland was passed." His life, indeed, seemed to prove the futility of dependence on English parties to his impatient generation, and two more rebellions were the result. Again it was the same story as in '98. The "Young Ireland" movement, instead of being looked upon as the result of Unionist policy, was looked upon as its justification.

Isaac Butt's academic ability all admit. He stated the problem in exactly the same terms as O'Connell—merely substituting the words Home Rule for Repeal. But so helpless was it in point of fact that arms again seemed the only resort after the failure of argument, with the Fenian movement as the result.

Then came Parnell's policy of constitutional agitation and parliamentary obstruction, which raised the Home Rule question once more into the sphere of practical

politics. But what was still more important was the rise of a champion in the person of Mr. Gladstone, animated with the spirit of Fox and the older Liberals, who began to see the havoc wrought by not only the crime but the folly of the Union, and from that day to this, in John Redmond's lifetime, there has been a general spread of that spirit of generosity. Again England asks, "What does Ireland now want?" Again an Irish leader answers, "It is the same as it always has been—our National Parliament." England, it seems, is ready to grant it if she only could be certain of the spirit in which it would be accepted. Hence it may not be useless to recapitulate the arguments of the leaders and see for ourselves in what spirit their demands were put forward.

First take Grattan's last protest before the Union.

"The one great capital and fundamental cause of Irish discontent was the interposition of the Parliament of Great Britain in the legislative regulation of Ireland, the interference of that or any other Parliament save only the King, Lords and Commons of Ireland. . . . Ireland considers the British Empire as the greatest western barrier against invasion from other countries. She hears the ocean protesting against separation, but she hears the sea likewise protesting against union. She follows, therefore, her physical destination, and obeys the dispensations of Providence when she protests, like

the sea, against the two situations, both equally unnatural—separation and union; but then she feels her Constitution to be her great stake in the Empire and the Empire the great security of her Constitution. We give our strength to this western barrier, for the security of our liberty; but if British Ministers should do that very mischief which we apprehend from the foreigner, namely, take away the Constitution, they take away with that our interest in the British dominions, and thus withdraw at once a great pillar of liberty and Empire. That Constitution has been the inheritance of this country for six hundred years. This Constitution the Minister destroys as the condition of our connection, and he destroys one of the pillars of the British Empire, the habitation of Irish loyalty."

O'Connell's message was just the same, breathing at once a spirit of Imperial loyalty and national independence.

"Illustrious Lady," he wrote in his well-known and almost pathetic address to Queen Victoria, "the rebellion of 1798 itself was almost avowedly and beyond a doubt probably fomented to enable the British Government to extinguish the Irish legislative independence and to bring about the Union.

"We feel and understand that if the Union was not in existence, if Ireland had her own Parliament, the popular majority would have long since carried every

measure of salutary and useful legislation and reform. Instead of being behindhand with England and Scotland, we should have taken the lead and achieved for ourselves all and more than we have contributed to achieve for them. If there were no Union, Ireland would be the part of the British dominions in which greater progress would have been made in civil and religious liberty than in any other part of the British dominions. The Union, and the Union alone, stands in the way of our achieving for ourselves every political blessing."

The message of Butt to the English Parliament was exactly the same; or, if anything, more moderate, considering that the federal Parliament would be supreme instead of co-ordinate.

"In claiming these rights and privileges for our country," ran one of the resolutions of the Home Rule Conference, "we adopt the principle of a federal arrangement, which would secure to the Irish Parliament the right of legislating for and regulating all matters relating to the internal affairs of Ireland, leaving to the Imperial Parliament the power of dealing with all questions affecting the Imperial Crown and Government, legislation regarding the Colonies and other Dependencies of the Crown, in the relations of the Empire with foreign States, and all matters pertaining to the defence and stability of the Empire at large, as well as the power

of granting and providing the supplies necessary for Imperial purposes."

The only questions they thought might offer a danger namely, the land and the Church, were to be excluded specially, but it must never be forgotten that, though occasionally identified they were never identical with Home Rule, and though legislative independence has been an argument in favour of agricultural and educational reform it has nothing to do with them, and hence their settlement cannot diminish its own merits.

The methods of Parnell were different; his message was the same. Speaking, for example, of the Home Rule Bill of 1886, he said:

"We have always known the difference, since the introduction of this Bill, between a co-ordinate and a subordinate Parliament, and we have recognized that the legislature which the Prime Minister proposes to constitute is a subordinate Parliament. Undoubtedly I should have preferred the restitution of Grattan's Parliament; but I consider that there are practical advantages connected with the proposed statutory body, limited and subordinate to this Imperial Parliament as it undoubtedly will be, which will render it much more useful and advantageous to the Irish people than was Grattan's Parliament."

And again:

"I understand the supremacy of the Imperial Parlia-

ment to be that they can interfere in the event of the powers which are conferred by this Bill being abused under certain circumstances. But the Nationalists in accepting this Bill go, as I think, under an honourable understanding not to abuse those powers: and we pledge ourselves in this respect for the Irish people, as far as we can pledge ourselves, not to abuse those powers, and to devote our energies and influences to prevent those powers from being abused. . . . The Imperial Parliament will have at command the force which it reserves to itself, and it will be ready to intervene, but only in the case of grave necessity arising. . . . I think that this is by far the best mode in which we can hope to settle this question. We look upon the provisions of this Bill as a final settlement of the question, and I believe that the Irish people have accepted it as such a settlement."

It may at first be thought these quotations are superfluous in a biography: on the contrary, I think they add weight to the importance of the present leader's message, which would lose half its force were it something peculiar to him or peculiar to his times. For, as he says, "Even though English government were the best in the world, I would still be a Home Ruler."

There are, in fact, few causes in British politics which have displayed at once such consistency and such perseverance as the Home Rule demand. It is no new

demand, for it is one with all Irish history: it is no revolutionary experiment, for Ireland was never so prosperous as when its principles were in force. But it is one which needs interpretation in the light of history, and probably it is only that chronic ignorance of Irish affairs and chronic indifference to the Irish demand which prevents John Redmond's message of peace from being accepted with alacrity by Liberals and Unionists alike.

A few quotations now from John Redmond himself will show how completely were his latest utterances in harmony with those of his predecessors. When, as late as March 30th, 1908, John Redmond introduced his Home Rule motion, declaring that the reform of Irish government was of vital importance both to England and Ireland, and that only in legislative and executive autonomy could a final solution be expected, it was suggested that words of restriction should be used showing that autonomy did not mean independence. His answer was very significant, and, as the foregoing quotations must have shown, very just. He resisted, he said, any such addition, because Home Rule had never meant anything else except to its opponents, who drew from this misrepresentation their strongest argument against it.

"We have always recognized the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament, and we have always held the view that it would be impossible to alienate that supremacy

in creating a statutory legislature for Ireland. The Bill of 1886 was based upon the maintenance of the supremacy of this Parliament. The preamble—the very first words of the second Home Rule Bill, of 1893, were these—'Without impairing or restricting the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament a legislature shall be created.'"

To the question, "Why does not the Irish party introduce a Home Rule Bill?" John Redmond replies in Mr. Barry O'Brien's "Dublin Castle."

"If they mean that we should put our demand into a bill and present it to the House of Commons, I do not think there would be any use in that. The House will give no attention to a Home Rule Bill which is not introduced by the Prime Minister of the day and made a Cabinet question. But if they want a concrete case, an illustration of the kind of thing we want, let them look to their self-governing Colonies and Dependencies."

As to what Irish affairs really are, John Redmond is equally emphatic.

"There again the position taken up by Parnell (which is the position we still hold) was most reasonable. He was willing that the Home Rule Bill should either specify directly the affairs which should be left to an Irish Parliament or, upon the other hand, confer complete powers of legislation on the Irish Parliament, subject to the exclusion of certain subjects." These

subjects were, in the Bill of 1886: The Crown, peace or war, the army, navy, militia, volunteers, foreign and colonial relations, dignities, titles of honour, treason, trade, Post Office and coinage; the Irish Parliament being also forbidden to make any laws respecting the endowment of religion, or in restraint of educational freedom, or relating to the Customs or Excise. The Irish police were eventually to be handed over to the Irish Parliament, but while Ireland's contribution to the Imperial revenue was to be in proportion of one-fifteenth to the whole, she was not to retain any representatives in the Imperial Parliament, all constitutional questions relating to the power of the Irish Parliament being submitted to the Judicial Committee of the English Privy Council. The Bill of 1893, however, still retained the Irish members in Westminster.

Hence, as John Redmond says, "When Englishmen ask us what we want we answer in a sentence: A measure of legislative autonomy similar to that enjoyed by any of your self-governing Colonies or Dependencies. If you want an illustration, look at Canada, look even at the Transvaal. The Transvaal is a new country and yet it enjoys legislative autonomy: Ireland, a more ancient kingdom than England, does not."

A union with England, permanent and perfect; a legislative independence, absolute and guaranteed; those

are the principles for which all Irish statesmen have fought and which still remain their demand. There never has been nor ever can be any question of separation; there ever is and ever has been a cry for domestic autonomy. That, in point of fact, is the whole history of Ireland—the first principle of Irish politics.

Such, then, is John Redmond's message from Ireland, for it is not merely a demand. It is not only the key to a complicated problem, it is also the olive branch between two nations whom misgovernment has rendered hostile. It is a return to the policy most conducive to Imperial unity and at the same time to national individuality. But it is more, for it is the only scheme of Empire which can endure the test of time and trial. It is a mistake to think Home Rule is an Irish question, it is as wide as the Empire; in fact, it is the very mainstay of Empire, and the Minister who would reverse its policy, like Pitt did in Ireland, would probably lose the loyalty of that Empire if he did not lose it altogether, as Lord North lost America, while the Minister who would listen to the cry in time would probably, as in the case of Canada, turn a "rebel" colony into one of the staunchest and most devoted partners in the English dominions.

In the words of Bernard Shaw, John Redmond's message to England is this: "Let her look to her Empire, for unless she (England) makes it such a

federation for civil strength and defence that all free people will cling to it voluntarily, it will inevitably become a military tyranny to prevent them from abandoning it; and such a tyranny will drain the English taxpayer of his money more effectually than its worst cruelties can ever drain its victims of their liberty. A political scheme that cannot be carried out, except by soldiers, will not be a permanent one. The soldier is an anachronism of which we must get rid—for only if it were possible to militarize all the humanity out of a man could one hope for some final end being thus attained."

CHAPTER XII

THE MISSION

MR. REDMOND'S demand for Home Rule I have ventured to call his "message": the practical effects of that remedy I venture to call his "mission." For there are many who will grant the speculative plausibility of the remedy but at the same time remain sceptical as to its actual efficacy. It was chiefly to answer these critics that John Redmond, after the defeat of the Councils Bill, began a series of speeches on the Home Rule question in which almost every aspect of it was touched, and if the message gives him the title of Nationalist or Patriot, the mission may not unfairly be taken to claim for him that title of Statesman which has so often been bestowed upon him already.

What, then, according to John Redmond are the practical aspects of Home Rule, apart from all question of historic rights or national aspirations? They may be roughly divided into five—the industrial, the economic, the social, the religious and the Imperial aspects.

If there is anything that is characteristic of Irish movements it is their antagonism: and this even in

spite of the fact that they are really in themselves complementary. If there is anything which is characteristic of the present leader, it is the comprehensiveness of his policy. He has many enemies. Mr. Sydney Brooks even wonders "whether he is any longer in touch with the ins and outs of Irish sentiment," and Sir Horace Plunkett deplores the fact that the political leaders do not "as a class take a prominent or even active part in business life," while the Sinn Feiners have declared open war upon the very existence of the party, as utterly useless. How far these accusations are justified in fact may be judged from the following analysis of the leader's speeches.

To begin with the industrial movement. It began in the days of the split in 1895, and was the outcome of the Recess Committee, which was composed of prominent leaders of public opinion, together with members of Parliament. Sir Horace, then Mr., Plunkett suggested that if its dictates were carried out the Irish people would cease to desire Home Rule. The result was that Mr. Justin McCarthy refused point blank to have anything to do with it, while Colonel Saunderson refused to sit on the same committee with John Redmond. On the other hand, as Sir Horace goes on to observe in his "Ireland in the New Century," John Redmond shared the opinion of his few followers, chief among whom was Mr. Field, that man cannot live on politics alone. He

joined the committee and "acted throughout in a manner which was broad, statesmanlike, conciliatory and as generous as it was courageous." He was not, as he wrote, as sanguine as the originator of the movement, but at the same time he said, "I am unwilling to take the responsibility of declining to aid in any effort to promote useful legislation for Ireland." And so successful was the enterprise that, as Sir Horace observes, when a Nationalist member met a Tory member of the Recess Committee, he laughed at the success with which they had wheedled a measure of Industrial Home Rule out of a Unionist Government. It was only, in fact, when the leaders, most of them anti-Home Rulers, tried to turn it into a substitute for self-government that John Redmond severed his connection with it, thus writing to the editor of the *Irish World* in New York:

"The promotion of Irish industries is so praiseworthy an object that some of our people in America have been deceived in this matter. I myself, indeed, at one time entertained the belief in the good intentions of Sir Horace Plunkett and his friends, but recent bouts have entirely undeceived me: and Sir Horace Plunkett's recent book, full as it is of undisguised contempt for the Irish race, makes it plain to me that the real object of the movement in question is to undermine the National party and divert the minds of our people from Home Rule, which is the only thing which can ever lead to real revival of Irish industry."

It was a thousand pities that the two should have become antagonistic, but when all has been said and done, it will be found that John Redmond's scheme is more comprehensive, since it includes that of Sir Horace; and one wonders, not why John Redmond is not an industrialist, but why Sir Horace is not a Home Ruler; in fact, it seems a puzzle to conceive how self-government could possibly prove fatal to industry. Certainly John Redmond does not think so. For example, speaking at Maryborough on 13th of October, 1907, he said:

"Now, what can we do ourselves? It is a question of a little thought, and of a little unity of action amongst the people. Here is a circular that we have recently issued from the United Irish League Offices. We have arranged in Dublin in connection with that office an Industrial Bureau, and we hope to work that all through Ireland, so as to induce the people to give a chance to their own industries. Let me read the circular:

"'Members of the United Irish League should use Irish manufactured goods.

"'Branches are required to exercise their influence in every locality, to secure that in the giving of local contracts a decided preference should be given by elected public bodies to goods of Irish manufacture.

"'That the local public bodies be requested to insist that the Irish trade mark should be stamped on all goods offered as Irish made.

"'That at every meeting held in furtherance of the National campaign, now being inaugurated, a resolution dealing with the promotion of Irish industries should be given a prominent place on the programme of the meeting, and, as far as practicable, sub-committees of the organization should be appointed to give effect to the resolution.

"'That deputations should be appointed in each locality to urge on shopkeepers the necessity of stocking Irish goods.

"'That individual members of the organization be requested to give their custom to shopkeepers who stock Irish goods.

"'That branches be requested to have displayed in their meeting rooms the names of shopkeepers and merchants who stock Irish manufactured goods in their districts, and that they instruct their secretaries to send to every householder in each district the names of such shopkeepers and merchants as give preference to goods of Irish manufacture.

"'The traders in each district in Ireland will be supplied, on application to the Industrial Bureau of the United Irish League at their offices in Dublin, with a full list of Irish manufacturers: and, finally, we invite the public everywhere to enter into communication with this Bureau, and to assist us in inducing the Irish people themselves to give a chance to their own manufacturers, by giving a preference to Irish goods.'"

The circular sounds like one issued by the Sinn Fein party; but it shows how at root there is little reason for the attacks of that party on the Irish leader.

"Now, what is the moral of all this I have been saying to you?" he continues. "The moral is this—that the industrial decay of Ireland is the greatest of all condemnations of English rule in this land; that Ireland is a country with great natural resources; that the Irish people have proved by their past history that they have an aptitude and an inherent capacity for industrial pursuits; that Ireland was once a country almost as prosperous industrially as England herself; but as soon as she became a serious rival in her markets and the markets of the world, those industries were totally suppressed by the English Parliament; that Ireland, during the eighteen years that she had her own Parliament, revived those industries, and that those industries died away again from the very hour that self-government was taken from our people. Now, what answer has any English statesman of any party to give to that argument for Home Rule? There is no argument in reply; and I therefore to-day put forward this one point in the Home Rule case—that the industrial decay of Ireland alone, if there was no other argument, would be conclusive proof of the justice and the necessity of our demand."

The second aspect of Home Rule is the economic

aspect. We can only judge it, as John Redmond maintains, by the ordinary tests applied to all Governments, and by every one of these, he maintains, the Government of Ireland stands condemned. And there is probably no speech of his which displays less sentiment or more science than the one in which he treated the Irish demand at the Mansion House, Dublin, on 4th September, 1907. It is too long to quote, but was to this effect:

By the test of population, the Union has been proved a failure, for it has cost half the inhabitants of Ireland. Take the test of religious liberty; it was only a year ago a University Bill was passed, and the great majority of Catholics are in inferior positions. Take the contentment of the people during the past century; there have been three rebellions suppressed in blood. Take prosperity; nearly all the industries are dead and a famine swept hundreds of thousands from Ireland. Take industrial development; railway freights are higher in Ireland than in any country in the world. Take education; the level is lower than anywhere in Europe. Take the cost of government per head; it has doubled, while the population has halved; and in addition there is universal dissatisfaction, little respect for law, which is administered in such a political spirit as to have practically no hold whatever on the people.

Such is the picture of which John Redmond draws each detail separately in the course of those famous

speeches of 1907 which I may term his great "Apology for Home Rule." Nothing but self-government, he maintains, can or ever will be the full remedy for that system of Castle boards which make the administration of Ireland at once the costliest and the least efficient of any in Europe.

There is more than sentiment in such an indictment. It would be made even by a business man; and therein does John Redmond differ from those patriots with whom love of country is everything and understanding of it nothing; who think that Nationalism is not so much a matter of the brain as of the heart; and it is probably for this reason that he has been given by the Press the double title of statesman and Nationalist. His mission is something more than the vision of an uneducated enthusiast: it is the practical programme of a man versed in history and economics, and in not only the art of loving his native land, but the science of serving it.

The third, or social aspect of Home Rule, though perhaps less thought of, is nevertheless one of the most important, for Ireland is to-day divided into some six or more parties. The classes are antagonistic, the creeds are antagonistic, the castes are antagonistic, and all of them grow up in two water-tight compartments. The moneyed classes and the common people have no sympathy; Belfast and Trinity are looked upon as dangerous to Catholics; the word English or English-educated is a

term of reproach among Nationalists, and a mark of distinction in society. All these parties move in different planes of thought and action, for the simple reason that they have not a common meeting-ground as they would have in an Irish House of Commons. In Grattan's day, there was far less antagonism of creed than in O'Connell's (according to Lecky); while the Parliament of 1782 made Dublin a centre of intellectual activity which united all classes in the respect and development of Irish talent and enterprise. Ireland is not yet a nation and cannot be until all these wounds are healed. Until there is a residential aristocracy and the representatives of the people can meet them upon terms of mutual interest and mutual respect, Ireland can only be a bundle of sects and factions.

It is this national union which Home Rule would inevitably bring about; and it is one far more healthy and far more lasting than any of parchment or of steel.

"No, we Catholic Irishmen," as John Redmond said in 1886, "repudiate this accusation of intolerance with scorn and indignation. We do not even understand the word religious bigotry. By the Irish nation we do not mean any class or sect or creed. By Irish independence we mean liberty for every Irishman, whether in his veins runs the blood of the Celt or the Norman, the Cromwellian or the Williamite, whether he professes the ancient faith of Ireland or the newer creed which has

given to our country some of the bravest and purest of her patriots."

This is what I should like to call the "Unionism" of John Redmond, for only by a return of the Parliament to Dublin can it be expected to bring back that real centre of national life that was there previously. Prior to the Union there was real unity; since the Union there has been nothing but faction. There is an exodus of native talent; there is an immigration of exploiters and men indifferent to the genius of the race. There is no national encouragement for Irish art or literature, simply because there is no centre of Irish thought. That is what John Redmond pleads for, and to my mind it is one of the strongest and healthiest of the results Home Rule would have.

There are, however, two obstacles to this new unionism which have given rise, perhaps, to more misunderstanding than any others, and are the two "bogeys" by which Home Rule is distorted. The one is the "Clerical" scare; the other the "Separation" scare. According to Mr. Herbert Paul, John Redmond is the "anti-clerical *par excellence*"; according to "Pat's" *Sorrows of Ireland* he is the very opposite. "A constitution is demanded for Ireland," writes the latter; "an independent parliament with an executive responsible to it. Up to a certain point this is a constitutional proposition. But who is to accept the new Constitution

if granted: Cardinal Logue or his deputy, Mr. Redmond? Obviously not the people, in any case. And yet, apart from the people, the proposition has no meaning in terms of democracy."

The question is far too delicate to be made a personal one, but considering that the only reason, according to some politicians, why Home Rule was granted to Botha, while it was refused to Redmond, is that the former was a free man, and the latter a priests' puppet, it becomes imperative to treat the matter; especially since Redmond, during the Education crisis, was accused by the Clericals of being animated by "the spirit of Henry VIII.," and according to one prelate was "a second Clemenceau." Of course, it is notorious that all public controversy is conducted in terms of hyperbole; but they are none the less spoken in earnest for all that.

Taking John Redmond, then, as spokesman of the Parliamentarians, what is likely to be the religious outcome of Home Rule? But, first, let us hear the two extreme views of which John Redmond appears the mean. Colonel Saunderson may be taken for one; Bernard Shaw for the other.

If ever there were a typical embodiment of the Ulster spirit, it was Colonel Saunderson, for in Ireland there has never been that *entente cordiale* with Rome known as the Oxford Movement, and the Protestantism of Ulster is the Protestantism of Tyburn. Hence his speech

at Portadown in 1893 was in every way a characteristic one. I merely quote extracts from it as indicating attitudes of mind rather than as expressions of arguments, for the key to an Irish question is the spirit in which it is treated, and these are not bad examples of the wrong spirit in which it is often approached by some.

Speaking for Irish Protestants, he said "that he was opposed to the setting up in this country of a new ascendancy more tyrannical and more detestable than any which had gone before, namely, the ascendancy of the Irish Roman Catholic Church;" but even this was too moderate a denunciation, and a short time later, at Lurgan, he spoke of Home Rule as the *great clerical danger*. Of course, he admitted that every priest was not an Archbishop Walsh. Some were better, some worse; some were excellent men; some bishops had certainly condemned the criminal action of the Land League; but what did that matter? If they had Home Rule, who was the priest who would then rule Ireland? Why, Archbishop Walsh. He was the man who returned over seventy members to the House of Commons; he was the wire-puller, and he even objected to the Coronation Oath being changed as inexpedient in the Protestant interests of the country."

As to a Catholic University, he could see nothing in it but an organized permanent domination of the clergy—a singular contrast with the broad-mindedness

in which John Redmond was ready to grant the Belfast Presbyterian University. "There were priests in all denominations, and he disliked them all equally," the Colonel once said, in a speech in the House of Commons. "If the House wanted to know what kind of citizens Roman Catholic education in Ireland turned out, it had not far to look. There were about eighty specimens below the gangway opposite. He did not say bad specimens, for that would be uncivil to members opposite; and he did not say good specimens, because he thought that would be insulting to the Irish people. They openly avowed they hated the British Empire. Whoever struck at Great Britain was their friend. Was this assembly going to increase the output of this product?"

If this be, as it undoubtedly is, a fair example by the Protestant spokesman of the religious attitude of the minority in Ireland, I may say, comparing it with the Catholic spokesman, that Ireland has more to fear from Protestant ascendancy than Catholic; while, if it be taken as typical of the Unionist attitude, it would certainly justify the wildest dreams of the Fenians. But it is merely such stuff as scares are made of. There are many who differ from Colonel Saunderson not only in spirit but in prophecy, and chief among these is Mr. Bernard Shaw, whose wonderful "Preface to Politicians" in "John Bull's Other Island," forms

one of the ablest antidotes to "Popery" which the most bigoted atheist could wish for with his dying breath.

"Just consider the Home Rule question in the light of that very English characteristic of the Irish people, their political hatred of priests," he writes. . . . "Do not be distracted by the shriek of indignant denial from the Catholic papers and from those who have witnessed the charming relations between the Irish peasants and their spiritual fathers. . . . For an Irish Catholic may like his priest as a man and revere him as a confessor and spiritual pastor, whilst being implacably determined to seize the first opportunity of throwing off his yoke. This is political hatred and is the only hatred that civilization allows to be mortal hatred. Realize, then, that the popular party in Ireland is seething with rebellion against the tyranny of the Church.

"Let us suppose that the establishment," he continues, "of a National Government were to annihilate the oligarchic party, by absorbing the Protestant garrison and making it a Protestant National guard. The Roman Catholic laity, now a cipher, would organize itself, and a revolt against Rome and against the priesthood would ensue. The Roman Catholic Church would become the official Irish Church. The Irish Parliament would insist on a voice in the promotion of churchmen: fees and contributions would be regu-

lated: blackmail would be resisted: sweating in conventual institutions, factories and workshops would be stopped: and the ban would be taken off the Universities. In a word, the Roman Catholic Church, against which Dublin Castle is powerless, would meet the one force on earth that can cope with it victoriously. That force is democracy: a thing far more catholic than itself. Until that force is let loose against it, the Protestant garrison can do nothing to the priesthood except consolidate it and drive the people to rally round it in defence of their altars against the foreigner and the heretic. When this is let loose, the Catholic laity will make short work of sacerdotal tyranny in Ireland, as it has done in France and Italy. Home Rule will herald the day when the Vatican will go the way of Dublin Castle and the Island of Saints assume the headship of its own Church. It may seem incredible that long after the last Orangeman shall lay down his chalk for ever, the familiar scrawl on every blank wall in the North of Ireland, 'To Hell with the Pope,' may reappear in the South, traced by the hands of Catholics who shall have forgotten the traditional counter legend, 'To hell with King William' (of glorious, pious and immortal memory), but it may happen so."

Were Mr. Redmond to embody such a proposition in an election manifesto, it would probably sweep the

Unionist seats and capture the whole Nonconformist vote; but it would forfeit every Catholic one. But there is something far too sober in John Redmond, a part of his English qualities, one might say (or as Bernard Shaw would say, Irish), to substitute one form of hysteria for another. In fact, if ever there was an embodiment of vigorous lay spirit, which did not run wildly into anti-clericalism, it is the present leader. Like Grattan, he sees that Nationalism is not a religious question, and that there are many temples, but only one forum. But were he as rabidly Catholic as Colonel Saunderson was Protestant, Catholicism might, I grant, once more appear in a guise hardly less terrible than the Spanish Inquisition: while if he took Mr. Bernard Shaw's attitude, Home Rule might be added to the ten persecutions of ancient Rome.

The Irish party, as he told Pope Pius X., is not a Catholic party like the German Centrum or the followers of the Comte de Mun; it is purely a national party, and, in all probability, so would the Parliament of Ireland be; and like some colonial pro-consul must have done in the Roman Senate, discussing the Home Rule bills of those days, he pleads for equality of treatment for all creeds. He is a Roman, not a Romanist, and he is as much opposed to the disqualifying of a University professor for the shape of his collar as he would be to the re-establishing of an Upper House

composed entirely of mitred heads. Nor, indeed, are the clergy themselves averse to or unaware of the strengthening of the lay position which would ensue from the granting of Home Rule and University teaching. Thus Dr. O'Dea, Bishop of Clonfert, in his third report on education (p. 296), remarked: "I am convinced that if the void in the lay leadership of the country be filled up by higher education of the better classes of the Catholic party, the power of the priests, so far as it is abnormal or unnecessary, will pass away."

As it was in the day of the Parliament of 1782, when one of the first resolutions of the Protestant leader was one of sympathy for their Catholic fellow-subjects, so in all probability would it be again. Protestantism unallied with English political tyranny would lose half its sting and religion become far more a topic for the pulpit than the tribune. Certainly as far as the leader himself is concerned, it would, as the following extract from an American speech testifies: "If I believed that Home Rule would mean for the Protestants of Ireland, not the oppression at the stake, which is unlikely and impossible, but the abrogation of one whit of their just civil and religious liberties, I would as an Irish Nationalist oppose Home Rule, and would quit my country whose people had not learned the first elements of liberty. We Irish Catholic Nationalists owe too much in our past history to our Protestant fellow-

countrymen ever to be guilty of the baseness of betrayal. We do not forget the history of Ireland. We do not forget that it was Protestants who won the Parliament of 1782; that it was Protestants who organized the Society of United Irishmen, both before and after it became a revolutionary organization. We do not forget that it was Protestants who gave the franchise to Catholics in 1793; that Protestants led the rebel army in '98; that Protestants gallantly but vainly defended Irish liberty in 1800; and we do not forget that every day that has passed since has witnessed the efforts of Protestants to defend and promote civil and religious liberty in the national life of Ireland."

Lastly we come to the most serious of all the aspects of the Home Rule case—its Imperial aspect. Is it a force in the direction of disruption, or is it the strengthening of the bonds of federation? On John Redmond's answer to this question he and his demand probably stand or fall. Is he a Separationist or an Imperialist. Most distinctly an Imperialist, I say, if his speeches and the traditions of Irish leadership are to be relied on. What, then, of those American speeches saying the Irish claim independence? Simply that those speeches are their own interpreters and that in Home Rule there is full recognition of nationality. Grattan never meant more: Butt never meant less. As to Ireland becoming hostile, I can only say that I can see no reason that

she should care to abandon those great Colonies she has helped to people, that great Power which has been built up by the sinews of her own sons, and bring down the historic Empire of which her genius has been one of the shining lights. And as far as I read John Redmond, that is not only his idea, but his very motive for Home Rule. "Here at the heart of the Empire," he wrote in 1903, "lurks its chiefest danger. If it was worth millions by the hundreds and lives by the tens of thousands to add the Transvaal and the Orange Free State to the Empire, what price can pay for a prosperous and contented Ireland."

So, too, his great example of Home Rule, the position of Canada, breathes the same spirit. There the two peoples were almost at war, and the two creeds distrusted each other: yet both were eager for Union yet filled with the spirit of Washington. For years the English Government could only think of Coercion as a means to unity, until when the Canadians were ready to take the Home Rule by arms—they were being refused when they pressed it by argument—it was granted them; and all the scares of terrorists were proved false. They were trusted and they were true, and to-day the Colony of rebels has become the very model of Imperial allegiance. The parallel to the case of Ireland is absolutely complete even to the moral; and hardly a month passes without John Redmond

repeating some part of that brilliant address to the Young Scots in Edinburgh in which he dealt fully with the history of Canadian Home Rule.

How, in the face of this and other assurances, the Irish leader's mission can be distorted into a scheme inaugurating the instant disruption of the Empire it seems impossible to explain save by the total absence of political honesty or intellectual sanity. It would be inaugurating a policy that can only be called suicidal, as Mr. Iwan Muller in the *Fortnightly* observed; for the establishment of an Irish Republic could only be a punishment, not a boon, since Ireland could be industrially ruined in a month by an alteration of a few pence in the Continental tariffs. No one understands that better than John Redmond. No, every Irish leader has been a Home Ruler and an Imperialist. They have stood out for an offensive and defensive alliance not so much from choice as from necessity; and nothing but geographical changes can alter that. This is why his mission is so statesmanlike, establishing as it does industrial and economic progress upon a national basis, and developing that nationalism without detriment either to creed or to class, under the protection of the great Empire it has done its share, and more, in establishing. With the Home Rule Bill starts a new page in Anglo-Irish history; and the Home Rule of John Redmond is not a danger but an opportunity.

THE IRONY OF CIRCUMSTANCE.

MR. JOHN REDMOND "WELL, IF I CAN'T RULE IN DUBLIN, I CAN HERE!"

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[*To face p.* 330.

CHAPTER XIII

THE PRESENT POSITION

THE death of the greatest Home Ruler in England, as King Edward VII. has been called, has for the while suspended the constitutional struggle between the aristocracy and the democracy of England begun in December, 1909, by the rejection of the Budget. For the union of Nationalists, Labour members and the Liberals has long since raised the issue out of the narrow sphere of party politics. As far as John Redmond is concerned, it places him in the position of his life. No other Irish leader before him has held such a sway, either in point of strength or personality, because for the moment he has ceased to be the leader of a faction and become the spokesman of a cause as world-wide as the Empire—that of democracy.

But if, as the *Punch* cartoon represents, he can rule at Westminster, the rise of a new Irish party under Mr. William O'Brien, one of the most significant events since the days of Parnell, has not a little weakened his power in Ireland just at the time when unity is most required. Ostensibly arising out of a dispute over the

Budget, it is really a reversal of the old Parnellite methods and the inauguration of an *entente* movement which will seek to bring about Home Rule through the consent and co-operation of all parties. Hence, some mention must be made of the events of the early months of 1910, which for the most part are too recent politics to need chronicling in detail.

The pledge given by the Premier at the Albert Hall was the keynote of the whole situation, and accordingly the General Election of 1910 was fought upon the Veto instead of upon Tariff Reform. The result gave to the Liberals only a bare majority that could be counted upon the fingers of one hand, hence they had to depend for their existence upon the support of the Labour and the Nationalist vote. Had the issue been one of purely party politics, the position might have been insecure under the dictatorship of an Irish leader: for example, had it been fought upon the Budget alone. As a matter of fact, the point raised by its rejection—far more important than the measure itself—had raised it into a sphere of national significance. It became the struggle of a representative against an unrepresentative body. In Ireland especially the peers had by their continual delay and rejection of legislation proved themselves the hereditary foes of the people: in England they had been no less hostile to the onward progress of democracy. For once, therefore, Englishmen and Irish-

men found themselves allied in defence of the same cause and fighting against the same common enemy. The position in which the Irish leader found himself as arbiter of the destinies of both democracies was one of singular difficulty. On the one hand, the Budget was most unpopular in Ireland, though undoubtedly one of the most favourable of the many unpopular Budgets. On the other hand, if it were rejected by Ireland, the Government, defeated upon the very measure upon which they had appealed to the country, could hardly proceed to demolish the authority of the House of Lords for a verdict which the people had endorsed. At the same time, the whole advantage of the situation, as far not only as Ireland but as England was concerned, lay in curtailment of the power of the Lords which the acceptance of the measure by the new House of Commons would entail. If it is true, therefore, that John Redmond's power was never greater, it is true that his task was never more difficult, a difficulty by no means lessened by the action of Mr. O'Brien; and the more sympathetic of the British Press quite appreciated the situation.

"He is in possession," wrote the *Westminster* of Feb. 11th, "of what according to the tradition of his party is the prize of prizes in Parliamentary warfare, the power of ejecting a Government by transferring his support to the other side. It looks glittering and

formidable, yet it is of all things the most difficult to use for any practical purpose. Twice has it come into the possession of an Irish leader, and twice it has passed out of his hands without having earned substantial advantages to his cause. Now it comes a third time, and the question before him is whether a third time it may not slip out of his hands without being used to any practical purpose."

It therefore became a question of personal capacity whether there would be any advantage reaped from the situation, and future history will probably ponder on those negotiations and tactics which, according to Sir John Gorst, have proved John Redmond the ablest politician of his times. The duel between Mr. Asquith on the one hand and the Irish leader on the other was full of the greatest interest, the one knowing that his defeat would mean the driving of the Liberal party into the wilderness for years and years, the other knowing equally well that Home Rule fell with Liberalism. The attitude of Mr. William O'Brien, on the contrary, was quite the opposite. He maintained that Home Rule was not worth the Budget, and far from identifying its success with Liberalism, nearly every division found him in the Unionist lobby. He believed that the great duty of the Irish party was to throw out the Budget and trust to the Unionists. "It is rank folly to talk of the prospect of the Veto passing," wrote the *Cork Accent* of

Feb. 18th, "and it is the supreme interest of this country to oppose the Budget, tooth and nail. As it cannot be passed without the Irish vote, Mr. Redmond will have been guilty of a shameful breach of his pledge if he connives at his country's robbery."

That John Redmond was well aware of the effect of the Budget in Ireland is seen from his continual negotiations to get concessions for Ireland; but throughout, his eye was fixed on the greater issue; and it was for this reason that he continually made his consent to allow the Budget to pass "without the alteration of a single comma" dependent upon some sort of guarantee, if the Prime Minister did not at once proceed with the Veto. The question of precedence thus became one of the utmost importance, for it was only natural that, in the game of give and take which needs must come into every conflict, John Redmond should know what he was getting in exchange for his own concessions on the subject of the Budget. Provided the guarantees were forthcoming, he was quite prepared to come to some agreement, and was convinced it could be made as tolerable, at least, as any Budget for Ireland can be under the Act of Union. "Long before I went to Canossa, to use Mr. O'Brien's phrase," said John Redmond at Tipperary early in April—"long before Mr. O'Brien went with Mr. Healy to his secret interview with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, weeks before

that I had satisfied myself from conversations I had had with Mr. Lloyd George that an amicable arrangement of all these concessions would be arrived at by the Government." The concessions referred to were those on spirits, licence duties, land taxes, probate, stamp duties and revaluation.

But the Budget he looked upon as a great weapon in the hands of the Commons, and he was determined not to let it pass till the Lords had accepted the Veto. "It was the greatest constitutional crisis for two hundred years," he maintained, "and it must end either in the abolition of the supremacy of the Lords, or the re-establishment of their power for the rest of the people's lifetime"—and the great weapon in the hands of the Commons was the Budget, and hence he called upon Mr. Asquith either to press the Veto or resign.

In effect, the Irish leader's demand was this: Mr. Asquith must make a definite statement that if the Lords reject the Veto resolutions he will demand guarantees from the King, and if the King refuses, he will resign office. Also that, until the Lords have passed the Veto resolutions or the King has given guarantees, the Budget shall not be allowed to leave the House of Commons.

For above all things a dilatory way of treating with the great problem was to be avoided at any cost, and

there were not wanting those who wished to postpone the conflict altogether.

The King's Speech, for example, had neither been emphatic, clear, nor even grammatical upon the all-important point of the readjustment of the authority of the two Houses. A suggestion of the internal reform of the Lords had been mooted, but as the *Nation* rightly observed, the elections had not been fought on the reform of the Lords, but upon the supremacy of the Commons, and for this John Redmond stuck out, asking that the Prime Minister should ask for guarantees from the King in the event of another deadlock. This Mr. Asquith refused on the plea that he wished to keep the Sovereign out of party politics, and that the King could hardly be asked to give any party a blank cheque. The retort was more telling than true and was well met by the Irish leader. He told the Government that they must therefore produce a Bill which, if rejected, could then be submitted to the Sovereign—but that the Government must be prepared to give some assurances before the Budget was passed.

The tension of the moment was supreme, but early in March the Prime Minister somewhat relieved it by announcing that the Government had adopted the methods for the destruction of the Veto commended by the Irish leader, of first introducing resolutions in the Lords and the Commons. These were to affirm

the total exclusion of the Lords from finance, the restriction of the Veto within the lifetime of one Parliament, and the substitution of a democratic for a hereditary second Chamber.

The appeal to the Crown upon such a proposition could no longer be thought unreasonable, much as a certain section of the Conservative Press denounced the passing of the Budget over the heads of the British electorate and the destroying of the Constitution at the dictation of John Redmond. But throughout, the Irish leader spoke as a House of Commons man, and one as deeply versed in the English Constitution as any of his critics. The "guarantee" asked for was at root but the exercise of that same power which had triumphed in the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832. Thus Lord Crewe, speaking of the power of the Prime Minister to create peers, said, "If a deadlock exists between the two Houses, and the country has clearly expressed its will, the Minister of the day is entitled to advise the Sovereign to create a sufficient number of peers to override the opposition of the House, and I should like to say—and it is important to remember the distinction—that if ever such an occasion does arise, it is not a question of the Minister's going to the Sovereign and asking the Sovereign to create a certain number of peers as a favour, but it is the constitutional exercise of the power of advice by the Minister

to the Sovereign. That is an important distinction, and it is important because it implies this, that the Minister has no right to give this advice unless he is prepared to say he would act upon it."

This power of the Minister might at first sight seem to weaken the power of the Crown; and at first, indeed, the cry was raised against the Republicanism of John Redmond. As a matter of fact, it would really strengthen it. Thus the *Nation* pointed out on March 5th:

"The Liberal party therefore appeals directly to the Crown, and says with respect that it is its duty and right and power to act on the verdict of 1910, when that verdict has been clearly embodied in proceedings and acts of the House of Commons. What," it continues, "is the Crown in a country like ours? It lives by and for the people. The future of the monarchy is absolutely bound up with the democracy . . . our crowned republic rests on the fact that even if some classes regard the monarchy as a stand-by for privilege and property, the masses also accept it as a guarantee that their liberties are to hold and that progress to further franchises is not to be barred. If we appeal to the Crown, therefore, we also appeal to the people."

It was this principle for which John Redmond fought: essentially constitutional, loyal and modern, and, when the last word has been said, the strongest pillar of the Throne; certainly far stronger than ever the authority of

the Lords could make it—the only one if the Throne is to be identified with progress.

The climax of the whole situation was reached towards the middle of April, when Mr. Asquith, after months of hesitation, capitulated and brought in his resolutions. "We feel compelled to take off our hat to Mr. Redmond," wrote the *Pall Mall Gazette*. "Redmond is King," wrote the *Daily Mail*, and *The Times* itself admitted, "Redmond is the real master."

"Undoubtedly the statement is true," as T. P. O'Connor wrote in the *Irish World*. "From his first speech to his last Mr. Redmond always adhered exactly to the same demand—namely, that the Premier, Mr. Asquith, should ask the King for guarantees, the moment the Commons had adopted and the Lords had rejected the Veto resolutions, to pass these resolutions by the creation of enough peers of Parliament, and, in case the request was refused, that Premier Asquith should follow it up with a request that if another election were demanded he should go to the election with the King's guarantee in his pocket and with the right to announce that fact to the people. This is what Mr. Asquith's announcement has now done. It is almost word for word Mr. Redmond's persistent demand."

The actual announcement was the scene of the wildest exultation, the members of the Liberal party forgetting all reserve and cheering, waving hats, papers and

handkerchiefs and according the Premier an ovation such as was "never given before except once or twice in Mr. Gladstone's most magnificent hours." The Tories, however, were exasperated and shouted back to the Liberals—"Why don't you cheer for Redmond?" and to the Irish—"Paid by America!" and it was only with the greatest difficulty that the Irish leader's brother could be held back in a personal onslaught on young Lord Winterton—"the most ostentatious insulter of the Liberals and the Irish." As to the leader himself, men rushed from all sides of the House to shake hands with him and congratulate him on the success of his persevering tactics. It is doubtful, indeed, if either O'Connell or Parnell ever received such an English tribute, and, as T. P. goes on to observe, his name is now cheered as warmly as Asquith's or Lloyd George's in the great English gatherings of democracy. In spite of Mr. Balfour's taunts, "You would give Home Rule to the Irish as the price for the Veto"—a statement which is singularly unhistoric of the party for whom Home Rule has been the *damnosa hereditas*, as he has elsewhere said—the general tendency seems to be, in the words of Mr. Winston Churchill, "We want to make a national settlement with Ireland."

There is no quarrel with the Crown, for the Crown is held of the people, as Mr. Asquith pointed out—a far more secure tenure than that by which either Tudor or Stuart

Sovereign held their thrones. It is Crown and Commons against the Lords—in other words, democracy against aristocracy—which is to be the great fight of the new reign, and as there has never been any battle between the two democracies of England and Ireland, the cause of Home Rule must inevitably triumph with the victory of the Commons over the Lords.

John Redmond stands at the present moment as the embodiment of English and Irish democracy. He stands for popular government, according to the best traditions of English history. That the Veto of the Lords should survive the Veto of the Crown is to him an anomaly passing comprehension. That he is therefore disloyal it is absurd to suppose, for he is endorsing the English instinct from Magna Charta to the Reform Bill. Even the fact that there has been no official act of condolence or expression of sympathy from the Irish party on the death of King Edward, than whom there has not been a more sympathetic Sovereign towards Ireland since James II., proves nothing, though the *Pall Mall Gazette* referred to the fact as the "one jarring note." "When it is borne in mind," it wrote, "that Mr. Redmond and his party are at this very moment demanding from Great Britain in the most menacing and arrogant way a great boon, their indifference to British feeling becomes an insolence which a proud people will deeply resent. Yet Mr. Redmond is

perfectly consistent. He has never, save in one or two attempts which have been too clumsy to convince anyone, attempted to win Home Rule by persuasion or loyal assurances."

It is true that a graceful tribute from the Irish leader would have done more than anything to win popular sympathy in England; at the same time, it would be entirely out of keeping with the traditions of the Nationalist party to recognize in any way officially the Sovereign until the restitution of the Home Parliament, so unconstitutionally taken away, has once more made him constitutional in Ireland. Personally, probably every single member of the party loved and appreciated the efforts of the late King. Over and over again in his speeches has the Irish leader given expression to this sentiment. It is not loyalty withdrawn but postponed; and if resentment is felt it can hardly have juster foundations than the resentment of a nation at the loss of an autonomy that has cost it millions in population.

It is said that King Edward VII. was himself a Home Ruler and had made it the ambition of his life not to hand on to his successor with the English Crown the burden of Irish discontent which he had inherited from his ancestors. It may be true and it may not, but if purely a fiction, it expresses a general feeling for a *rapprochement* which is entirely reciprocated by the Irish leader. The next reign will probably settle the

great grievance. If it does, it will see the return of that loyalty for which the Irish shed their blood in the days of the Stuarts, and the words of the *Freeman* probably echoed the sentiments of John Redmond when in a leading article it said :

"He, George V., like King Edward, has travelled over the world. He has been through all the self-governing possessions of the Crown. He has had abundant opportunities of learning the blessings which Home Rule brings to the people and the Colonies. . . . His public career may be said to have been thus far closely identified with the growth and recognition and realization of the Home Rule idea and principle within the Empire. It is not very far-fetched to imagine that he has assimilated the lessons thus inculcated. It will be no new thing to him should he before long be called upon to open our Irish Parliament in person. Such a great act of State will be in perfect harmony with the greatest public duties he has hitherto discharged. And we can promise him, when that joyful occasion brings him to Dublin, the first honestly Irish reception an English monarch has ever had here."

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